

# V. SUKHOMLINSKY ON EDUCATION





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## Sukhomlinsky's Paradox

All over the world school education is attracting ever increasing attention. It is now the "done thing" to criticise school methods, and "reforming" school education has become a national hobby in many countries. Yet much of this criticism concentrates on what schools should not be, rather than putting forward concrete suggestions as to what they should become. There is much talk of the education explosion, of the need to prepare children for the world of the future, rather than that of the present, and contrasts are always being drawn between "creative" and "rote" learning. Creativity has become an almost universal cult in education circles everywhere; the most homage is paid to that ideal by those who lack a clear understanding of what creativity really involves and of the ways it can best be fostered.

While futurologists give us confident forecasts with regard to almost all other spheres of human life, they do not hazard many guesses at what our schools will be like twenty years

from now. With relative certainty they predict the era of teaching machines. However schools are not factories and their success depends not on equipment or technology but on ideas.

There is no doubt that there is no shortage of serious ideas and profound minds in this age of ours, yet what is the primary concern of parents and teachers . . . and indeed not theirs alone?

I was once invited to give a lecture at the Soviet space research centre "Star City": I knew quite well what topics I could ask my audience about, but what was far less obvious to me was what I, for my part, should recount to them. The choice however was made for me, since the staff from the research centre asked me to talk about the work of Vasily Sukhomlinsky.

Today as never before tremendous interest is being shown in the work and life of Sukhomlinsky. His books are not novels, stories or even manuals on child care in the family, but straightforward studies in education, yet they are published in editions running into millions and each work is always sold out within a matter of hours.

It may seem strange that Sukhomlinsky's works are read by people who have little connection with the education world. A power engineer will take along a book of his to read while travelling; a schoolgirl of fourteen may take one to her teacher in the hope that after reading it, she will cease to treat her pupils, as her charge sees it, unfairly. In almost every

newspaper that carries material on children and education grateful references to Sukhomlinsky abound.

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Vasily Sukhomlinsky made a name for himself in the education world only very gradually. Once his reputation has been established though, he was at the forefront of public interest for a number of years. He was working with children for thirty-five years and publishing books and articles for twenty. His works were not only published in the USSR but have also been translated into many foreign languages. Sukhomlinsky was awarded almost all the honours that can be paid to an outstanding educationist; he was a Merited Teacher of the Soviet Union, a Hero of Socialist Labour, and a Corresponding Member of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences. His school was renowned far and wide, when he died at the height of his career in September 1970, aged a mere fifty-one.

Sukhomlinsky left behind him thirty books and some five hundred articles which do not in any way smack of startling innovation. He did not revolutionise education methods.

Yet his fame was far more than a matter of chance. His works are popular and widely read and quoted, because he provides *answers*—answers to thousands of questions which confront anyone working with children and young people. In almost any difficult situation it is possible to recall relevant recommendations made

by Sukhomlinsky, suggestions that are effective, simple and sensitive.

At a time when many educationists and teachers were engaged in a search for new paths and new universal theories, dreaming of new, foolproof concepts of schooling, a modest teacher from the village of Pavlysh, that numbers a mere three thousand inhabitants and is far away from Moscow and Kiev, was moulding a school of a completely new type. The first thing that would strike the visitor about it was that it did not seem to differ in any way from ordinary schools of the traditional type . . . yet on closer inspection it soon emerged that Sukhomlinsky's traditional school is in fact far in advance of all innovatory types taken together.

This twentieth century of ours is an age of systems analysis. It is being increasingly accepted that when we are confronted by interconnected elements, far more important than the individual elements are the connections between them.

Indeed the crux of Sukhomlinsky's approach is that he concentrates on the link-up between all elements of education, and their interdependence. There is nothing in school education which he regards as possessed of either central or secondary significance. All elements in the education process are equally important to Sukhomlinsky. For the teacher a pupil should not merely be a "pupil", but, far more important, a "person", who needs both character moulding and instruction.

Similar ideas have been expounded by a variety of teachers in the past. They have also been put into practice at least with regard to children of pre-school age or in junior classes. These ideas were also voiced in respect of older children of 15-17, as a noble intention. Yet, when teachers are confronted by the teenager of today, so often noisy, impudent and critical and by no means always anxious to learn or calmly receptive to knowledge, so often noble intentions fade and teachers' humanistic ideals pale to nothing.

Both in theory and practice Sukhomlinsky demonstrated that a complex modern secondary education can be given to any healthy teenager, and what is more, in an ordinary school, in ordinary large classes without carefully selected teachers or pupils, and without resorting to streaming.

Yet to Sukhomlinsky the most important thing for the teacher to remember is that school should always remain for both young children and teenagers the temple of joy of which teachers dreamt as long ago as the Renaissance. It might seem that the only way to achieve teaching success without coercion were play, yet play methods are virtually out of the question in senior classes. Sukhomlinsky demonstrated how the actual learning process could be a source of happiness not only for young children but for senior pupils as well.

That particular goal is indeed all-important in any school of the latter twentieth century, when secondary education is gradually be-

coming as much a mass phenomenon as was instruction in the three "R's" in the middle of the last century.

Some teachers succeed in making their charges happy, while others are demanding and strict in their efforts to develop their pupils and enrich them through knowledge, an achievement they find impossible without constant testing of ability, industry, and ambition.

Sukhomlinsky, on the other hand, succeeded in uniting these two goals, which at first glance might appear mutually exclusive.

\* \* \*

Why does learning come so hard to certain pupils, why from the very outset do some boys and girls start to lag behind their peers in overall development, find themselves obliged to repeat years and in the end leave school without having received a proper education? Sometimes teachers apply up-to-the-minute methods and manifest great skill as they build up brick by brick, storey by storey, and succeed in keeping the building intact during a child's school career.... Yet when a year or two has passed the whole edifice collapses, because it never had a really firm foundation.

Sukhomlinsky was unable to understand those inspectors who on visiting a school would always make a bee-line for the senior classes. He, like no one, knew all too well that foundations are laid at the very beginning of a school career, and indeed long before children reach school at all.



Throughout the Soviet Union children start school at seven and in certain republics an additional preparatory class prior to Class 1 has recently been introduced.

This preparatory class was Sukhomlinsky's favourite class. Sukhomlinsky as headmaster always took that class, knowing full well that it provided the foundation for the individual pupil's education and character training. He used to refer to this preparatory class as his "School of Joy".

Sukhomlinsky would lead his group of fifteen or sixteen six-year-olds—both girls and boys—not indoors like the other pupils, but out into the garden.

He would announce: "Our school will be out here under the blue sky, on the green grass, under this spreading pear tree, in a vineyard or a green meadow. When you come along tomorrow come barefoot, that would be best of all at our school."

Speaking as if he were raising the stage curtain, Sukhomlinsky would solemnly declare: "This is where our school begins. From here we will look out at the blue sky, the garden, the village and the sun."

Was that really schooling? Yes, schooling, the very beginning of schooling. A teacher who greets his small charges and immediately opens an Alphabet is starting out with the second act of the play, not the first, as if he was either short of time, or the children had arrived so late as to miss the opening curtain.

So the first act of school was not inside the

schoolhouse but in the lap of Nature, at the "fount of words and reason". Sukhomlinsky's pupils were able to drink from that fount. They used to walk anything up to three or four miles a day with their teacher; to admire the dawn and twilight together; in autumn they would study the clouds and in winter the contours of the snowdrifts; their imaginations would run wild as they listened to fairy-tales or invented their own stories; verses would come tripping off their tongues and they would start shouting for joy with their teacher, running wild among the bushes chanting the lines newly devised. . . . They had their own "Dream House"—a cave where they built a stove with their own hands, or again a dilapidated old hut where they would gather together when autumn rains would be streaming down outside. They would listen both to the music of Nature and to music on gramophone records, sing and draw, indeed drawing was a particularly popular pastime. Yet all this represented far more than idle diversion. Sukhomlinsky used to maintain: "Until a child has sensed the flavour of words, . . . there is no point in teaching him to read and write, and when teachers do that they are condemning their pupils to an uninspiring grind ahead."

The pupils from the "School of Joy" would gaze at sunlit meadows, listen to the whirring of midges, the chatter of grasshoppers . . . then they start to draw meadows and then they write the caption "Meadow" underneath their pictures. Each word and each letter are an ex-

citing discovery, for the children come face to face with them not in books, but out of doors in real woods or meadows.

The children's nature walks bring more and more words into their workbooks: "village", "oak", "willow", "wood", "smoke", "ice" so that "the children learn to read and write far from any stuffy classroom, blackboard, chalks, dull drawings or letter-cut-outs".

Is this technique an anachronism or reminiscent of Rousseau? An attempt to recreate an eighteenth-century pastoral idyll with meadows, flowers and reed-pipes (all Sukhomlinsky's pupils used to make reed-pipes and play tunes on them)? This achievement should not give rise to any sceptical smiles: before we know where we are this eighteenth-century learning situation may come into its own as a model for the twenty-first.... Sukhomlinsky in his teaching methods penetrated that Holy of Holies of teaching, that very few teachers dare to enter, just as few surgeons venture to undertake complex operations on the heart or brain. This sphere of the child's life, about which so much is being written, on which so much detailed research work is being carried out and where so many education experts are still groping in the dark, is that of the emotions and the subconscious. Sukhomlinsky maintained that weird and wonderful fairy-tale characters open up to a child not only beauty but living truth as well. All dry explanations of life's truths are dead for a child if they strike no chords in his heart. Two blacksmiths live

on the sun according to the ancient fairy-tale and this reveals more to the small child than any account of the sun's physical properties, although of course not one child actually believes the story of the blacksmiths.

Emotionality for Sukhomlinsky is not a factor which supplements other fundamental "aspects" of teaching, not one of a list of essential factors in the lesson context, but a means towards stimulating interest and the only way in which to stretch a child's mind, to preserve the magic of childhood while teaching children.

"Emotional awakening of the mind" is Sukhomlinsky's method and that of his colleagues, the other teachers at the Pavlysh school. They develop their pupils' minds by bringing out their emotional response rather than their mental faculties direct; through the emotions they develop the mind.

It might at first seem that the path from a teacher's knowledge to pupils' knowledge would be a straight one. Yet in reality the shortest route proves the longest and most difficult, if the "conductor" of the emotions is not set in motion. The path that leads from the teacher's knowledge via his emotions and then those of the pupil to the pupil's knowledge proves far shorter. . . .

With reference to his pupils about to move on from the "School of Joy" into the first class, Sukhomlinsky writes that the learning process for his charges at that stage should be "no question of rote-learning, but dynamic intellectual life proceeding in a world of games,

fairy-tales, beauty, music, fantasy and creativity". Sukhomlinsky's pupils are not children with satchels on their backs that have to be stuffed with as much knowledge as possible; indeed they do not set about acquiring knowledge as such. Such abstract goals are outside the child's horizon in Sukhomlinsky's view. He imparts to his pupils the joy of intellectual effort and the experience that effort leads to, his pupils aspire after that joy and in doing so make good progress. Their goal is pleasure and joy and all in the school setting!

More often than not children lose some of the magic of childhood after they start school. In the charge of Sukhomlinsky however they only become children in the true sense of the word at school. School, far from cutting childhood short, prolongs it. More than that it restores the joys of childhood to those children who for various reasons were deprived of them at home.

For whole months on end children in the first three classes of his school play at Robinson Crusoe, invent tales of their own, build the island of Lilliput from reeds and ply-wood, plant out rose bushes in their "Arbour of Beauty", fashion an "underground emerald kingdom" from pieces of coloured glass (inspired by Ivan Bazhov's tales of the *Malachite Casket*) and read aloud stories of Tsar Saltan, Robinson Crusoe, Baron Münchhausen, Gulliver in the specially set out, "Fairy-Tale Room" where the visitor is confronted by Solovei Razboinik, Ilya Muromets, Red Riding Hood and

other fairy-tale characters, a room where tales by Andersen, the Brothers Grimm, Lev Tolstoy, Konstantin Ushinsky, Kornei Chukovsky and Samuil Marshak ring out time and time again.... It is here also that the boys and girls play toys and dolls. Each one has his special favourite among them. The children at Sukhomlinsky's school play toys up to the age of ten, yet this in no way prevents them learning right from Class 1 how to grow corn on the school plot, to work with their hands, to take care of trees, birds, fish, to build models of wind-driven electric stations and a score of other no less intricate models, to play chess ("chess is essential for the development of a child's mental powers and faculty of retention") or prevents mathematics tournaments being held as early as Class 3, and frequent use being made of such words as "phenomenon", "cause", "result", "event", "conditioning", "distinction", "similarity"....

To say that toys *prevent* Sukhomlinsky's pupils from engaging in all these other activities is an understatement. It is precisely fairy-tales and children's creativity in play, lessons in resourcefulness drawn from the folklore, which serve to pinpoint the shortest route to all that is truly up-to-date in science, to abstract concepts, for they arouse, develop and enrich children's thought processes.

On all sides there are demands being made for "more effective teaching", although in practice "effectiveness" is usually misconstrued as "intensivity".

Sukhomlinsky's pupils were not hurrying anywhere. Their teacher went out of his way to preserve their mental and emotional equilibrium, their sense of life's fulness, their clarity of thought and their confidence in their own strength. It is often a good three or four months before they became accustomed to the school routine, and not the first day as many good teachers would proudly claim elsewhere. Initially some of the pupils were allowed to leave the classroom when they wish to do so, for the teachers are educating the children and not breaking their habits. Almost half of Sukhomlinsky's lessons were conducted out of doors, in a summer house or out in the fields, because he believed that eighty-five per cent of children, who make poor progress, fall behind because of various often undiagnosed ailments and he took meticulous care of the children's health. All the children in Sukhomlinsky's charge had a proper breakfast at home before starting lessons, they slept out of doors at midday and did their homework in special summer houses built by older pupils. Sukhomlinsky's pupils never had pasty cheeks, circles under their eyes; they are all rosy-cheeked and tanned, their complexions real "strawberries and cream". Sukhomlinsky does not only regale his pupils with fairy-tales in order to promote their intellectual development, but also in the interests of their health, since he established a definite connection between joy and health, and between boredom and sickness. Sukhomlinsky was proud of the successes reaped

by his pupils; perhaps his greatest triumph was that from the third class onwards none of his pupils has ever come down with a cold!

Sukhomlinsky did not give his young pupils bad marks. His pupils go up into Class 5 without ever having had a bad mark or seeing one for that matter. Indeed Sukhomlinsky could not imagine how anyone could give a small child a bad mark. To use the words of the eminent Polish educationist Janusz Korczak that he "respects children's lack of knowledge" and he was patient: for a year, or even perhaps two or three a child will perhaps "fail to catch on, but the time will come when he shall master the problem". If some venture ended in failure Sukhomlinsky avoided marks altogether. This meant that a child was neither disgraced or punished but later on would strive to prove worthy of a mark.

Marks as administered by Sukhomlinsky were always optimistic; they are rewards for diligence, not punishment for laziness. Only six times did Sukhomlinsky fail to enter marks at the end of a school quarter, yet nevertheless half of the pupils completed the fourth class with certificates of commendation, and almost all the rest managed to finish with good marks. Sukhomlinsky managed to persuade his pupils' parents not to demand inordinately high marks from his pupils. His school was not one which chased after "distinctions": "star pupils did not feel themselves a world apart, while those who only just made the grade were not oppressed by any feeling of inferiority."



The parents connected with Sukhomlinsky's school were a breed apart as well: for twelve years they used to come to the school twice a month for a special course in psychology and education techniques, which made a total of 350 hours exceeding in length any course of study at a university or college.

The teachers at this school also lead very different lives from most of their colleagues. Sukhomlinsky holds that a teacher's free time is the root which feeds the branches of his creativity. He does not demand any written reports, or any fixed duty rota. He encourages the teachers to check a representative cross section of the children's exercise books rather than spend hours poring over them, and whenever there is an opera or concert of classical music to be seen on television then all meetings and seminars are cancelled.

Sukhomlinsky left behind him a detailed theory on the subject of training teachers within the school situation. Many people thought he had specially selected the best teachers from the whole area. That was not the case: instead he had taught them himself and in his turn learnt from them. All the discoveries made at the Pavlysh school were the fruit of joint effort on the part of the school's finest teachers and many of Sukhomlinsky's books were devoted almost entirely to recording their experience. He only started to write of himself as a teacher or educator and of his own personal experience after he had been teaching for close on thirty years.

Sukhomlinsky exhorted his fellow teachers to remember that they were not *à deux* with their pupils but that “a third person is also present as well—your conscience, your teacher’s conscience”. He always went out of his way to bring other teachers round to sharing his ideas and felt that the hardest task of all was to mould a teacher’s convictions with regard to his work, to instill faith in children into them.

Faith in children, in their strength, in their ability and their urge to “turn out well” was the main feature of all Sukhomlinsky’s work. He worked with young teachers for many years, trying to demonstrate to them how they should go about their work and patiently explaining his views. Yet if even after several years’ practice in teaching it turned out that a teacher had still not learnt to have faith in children, that their inexperience and weaknesses irritated him, then Sukhomlinsky would discharge such a teacher. To teach without faith in children was in his view impossible. A lack of faith meant a lack of love.

When asked what the most important thing in his life was Sukhomlinsky would always reply without a moment’s hesitation, “My love for children”.

\* \* \*

Sukhomlinsky’s education theory was centred on the child and his needs. Attempts to evolve such theories had been made before. All

the finest of the world's educationists have aspired to that goal and more often than not became guilty of that fatal excess known in the education field as "pedocentrism": the theorist ceases to lead the child but follows in his footsteps, without fostering any new serious interest in the child, he takes as his guide the child's passing interests.

Not only did Sukhomlinsky elaborate a reasonable middle path in this respect and avoid excesses, but he also lit upon a fundamentally new solution to the problem. He leads the child to knowledge, teaches him seriously and thoroughly, starting out not from any chance interests of the children in his charge but from the demands inherent in the common state curriculum for all schools of the Soviet Union: his main concern was *to foster in the child the desire to learn*.

According to Sukhomlinsky education is an impossible goal, if the pupil feels no inclination for self-education. To mould a child's character is impossible if the child experiences no urge to shape and direct his character.

It may seem superfluous to draw attention to the importance of self-education in the present period? . . . . However what represents no more than a secondary concern for others is fundamental to Sukhomlinsky's way of thinking. What others regard as desirable he sees as essential. What others would classify as result, he sees as cause.

All the recommendations Sukhomlinsky makes and all his articles, books and ideas are

centred round one and the same idea, the need to foster interest in learning, to teach children to derive joy through diligence, and to impart to them the desire to become worthwhile people. A child should not be allowed to feel that he is inferior to others, incapable or backward, his sense of dignity must not be slighted. All children, even the most backward, must be trained for the role of worthwhile people, "for there is no other way", according to Sukhomlinsky.

Sukhomlinsky rejects outright the possibility of resigned acceptance of a child's intellectual weakness and his corruptibility. He believes only in an optimistic outcome of the struggle for the child and it is to be hoped in an ordinary run-of-the-mill class. In the Soviet Union it is well known that children are not put through tests: teachers and pupils are unaware of the very word IQ. Sukhomlinsky is uncompromising as ever in the following reference to backward children: "Such children should be taught in ordinary schools; it would be quite out of the question to set up for them any special educational establishments, that would be contrary to elementary humanity. These children are not ugly, merely the frailest and most delicate of all the flowers in mankind's infinitely various garden. It is not their fault that they came into our schools thin, weak and defenceless. The guilt can be laid at the doors of Nature, the whole human race, the age-old social injustice which has been annihilated but its fruits are still there to last for years..."

Sukhomlinsky's love for children is a love which is essentially active. It is possible to love a child to distraction, yet if a child is not getting on well at school love shown him by an adult is not going to make him happy. Love involves bestowing happiness and what happiness can be compared with self-confidence, with joy derived from success in studies?

In passing it is worth noting that no teacher before Sukhomlinsky had made such a powerful appeal to love children and understand them. To love children in general is no easy task and one which is not within everyone's grasp. It is a task that confronts those entrusted with the care of children with particular difficulties, for they may find themselves up against children with a wide range of different characters, sometimes of the most unattractive variety. Hardest of all is the task of loving and understanding all children for those teachers working with children whose thought patterns are as yet undeveloped or slow or who quite simply have no ability to learn. Teaching able pupils is an easy and pleasant task, indeed a delight. Alas, every class contains only a handful of outstanding pupils. Sukhomlinsky comes to the rescue of the slower pupils, those whom Nature herself seems to have condemned to failure, humiliation and despair. Indeed it is perhaps the epitome of humanism to "overcome that which appeared to be laid down by Nature herself".

Sukhomlinsky had not yet reached the age of thirty when he found himself confronted for

the first time with the most insuperable of all a teacher's problems. Each day he would go the rounds of the classes conducted by his colleagues and listen to the answers proffered by the pupils. He finally came to ask himself: "Why do these answers often contain nothing of the child's own real live thoughts? We are not teaching the children to think for themselves!"

The skill of the teacher consists in his ability to teach children to think! Later Sukhomlinsky was to note in his writings: "This realisation inspired me, it gave me the extraordinary happiness of creative inspiration."

He listened to the answers given by two small girls. The answers were perfectly adequate, yet coming forward with them obviously brought the girls no pleasure. Why was that? Was it that they were not interested in the material? Lesson material cannot however all be interesting.

As soon as we come round to the viewpoint that children should only be offered material that interests them, a school immediately loses the opportunity of providing children with firmly based systematic knowledge, a school curriculum then becomes hopelessly out of touch with modern life.

Sukhomlinsky then established that it is not lesson material as such which brings the pupils joy. Rather it is the work the pupil carries out, his mastering of difficulties, his small victories over his own shortcomings. That is the source of interest which can be something constant,

at both boring and inspiring lessons. Success! First hurdles won! A child's first victory—these are the keys to a teacher's victory over Nature, over a child's "natural" abilities or lack of them.

Pupils grow accustomed early to the idea that in any class there are leaders and those who lag behind: the weaker pupils accept with resignation that geometry problems will be beyond them and that they are bound to make mistakes in their compositions.

Sukhomlinsky pondered and deliberated all these questions slowly and carefully. For years, even decades he would turn over each of his ideas in his mind before finding correct solutions.

However whatever problem he turned to, he would embark upon it with faith in his ultimate victory. The other teachers at his school came to believe in his victories as well and—what is most important—the children as well. A child must believe in himself, believe that diligent work will enable him to come to grips with his weaknesses, and that good school progress is within everyone's reach. When Sukhomlinsky began his teaching career, his first concern was his pupil's literacy. Many children used to have to repeat years because of their weak written work and it seemed that there was no power on earth capable of doing away with their poor literacy. Two years' intensive work enabled Sukhomlinsky to cut down the numbers with a low literacy rating by half. That was the first major achievement in the school's

history—the first battle and the first victory.

Then Sukhomlinsky took on a different problem: how to impart to the children a strong desire to learn, to fill the children with a thirst for knowledge. If children are not eager to learn, all efforts on the teacher's part are in vain. Sukhomlinsky never tired of repeating that "without curiosity there can be no school. All our schemes, quests and projects are worth nothing if children feel no desire to learn". Later he expressed the paradoxical idea that was subsequently to become as well-known as celebrated paradoxes in mathematics which lent impetus to the whole of scientific progress.

The desire to learn, as pointed out above, comes only in the wake of success in study. This desire stems not from the children's interest but from their ability to learn.

It would thus follow that in order for a child to make good progress at school . . . he must make good progress at school!

Sukhomlinsky pinpointed this paradox and went on to resolve it. The solution proved quite "simple": children should not only be taught but also taught how to learn and achieve success. If a child is taught and given the chance to experience the inspiration that can be gleaned from schoolwork, the joy it can bring, then interest in his schoolwork will appear and he will go on to conquer new ground. The paradox pinpointed by Sukhomlinsky charts out the most fruitful strategy the teacher can follow.



Success and the joy of inspiration—these constitute the “teaching machine” of the twentieth century, the momentum of learning, the force which explodes the pupil’s indifference to school and compels him to study.

However not all children can achieve success in grammar, physics or chemistry. It is vital to have patience and pick out some sphere of activity for each child, where he can come into his own and achieve not just success, but “significant success”. Each child should outstrip his fellows at least in something and feel himself strong and intelligent!

To this end it is not a spirit of sportsmanlike competitiveness which is required as some educationists would have us believe, for in trials of speed, agility and accuracy the outsiders are bound to figure among the “champions”. Sukhomlinsky eradicated with methodical consistency all the hundred and one things which can humiliate even a single child, or rob him of his self-confidence. Gymnastics, the quest for beauty and harmony of movement is ideally suitable for schoolchildren, whereas sports competitions aimed at singling out champions are out of place in schools. Sukhomlinsky ascribed far more importance to physical labour, which involves a considerable element of mental effort. This is a sphere where every child should be able to achieve significant success and such success may well have a beneficial effect on his class work.

Sukhomlinsky then proceeds to elaborate a well-defined theory for fostering diligence. To him it is not important that children should work out in the fields or in workshops. He is not after any kind of labour; he is for labour that bears fruit, in the context of education and fosters a love of work, both physical and mental. "Labour as such has no interest for children," writes Sukhomlinsky. Where there is no interest there can be no love of work. Only labour which involves thought, creative thought, aspiration to success and real interest is important to the teacher. To take a simple example: if a teacher wants children to work out in the fields, or tend flower-beds, then a good piece of land must be selected for the purpose. That will be advantageous from the agricultural point of view but, as Sukhomlinsky points out, not for the teacher! On a fertile plot his pupils will be able to bring in a good harvest. However it is not the size of the harvest that counts, but the number of difficulties that have been overcome, it is in terms of the latter that success and joy should be assessed. Children should be led forward to confront what is difficult, almost impossible, and then be helped to conquer the impossible. From childhood a person should be given to feel that he can do everything, that he is the very same hero he had come to admire in his story-books. Then incidentally he will start to grow more aware of those heroes and be more eager to imitate them. It is impossible to unearth the strong, brave and heroic side to every child's

nature and show him what he is capable of with mere words, it must be done through the conquest of real difficulties.

For centuries educational theorists have given thought to ways of alleviating their pupils' labours. Sukhomlinsky on the other hand created conflict situations, as it were, between dreams and possibilities, plans and their implementation. For five hundred children he laid on facilities for pursuing eighty different hobbies and, what is more, facilities that were created by the work of the children's own hands. The hobbies ranged from poker-work to radio-electronics. Legend has it that towards the end of his life Sukhomlinsky dreamt of a home-made school helicopter. There is no doubt that given time, they would have built it. . . .

Sukhomlinsky encouraged adolescents to prove themselves, show what they were capable of and assert themselves. Given that it comes naturally to teenagers to seek to prove themselves, Sukhomlinsky encouraged them to do so in workshops and hobby groups side by side with their peers, to show what they can. The young people at school in Pavlysh made light of their "growing pains" in comparison with their peers elsewhere, for the disciplinary impact of intelligent, happy work in a collective knows no bounds.

Enthusiasm for work is catching. Children cannot be taught to enjoy work, but they can be infected with that enjoyment. Sukhomlinsky insisted that pupils should find themselves in

an atmosphere of all-pervasive work. All his pupils were busy, all were working towards some sort of goal, both the senior boys and girls and the teachers. In that kind of atmosphere, work comes to be respected by the children as a moral virtue.

In order to ensure fruitful study it is important that a class should have the appropriate "intellectual context" and that the general attitude to learning should be a positive one. Important in this context are meaty conversations between pupils, and a variety of intellectual interests.

A "work context" is also essential to foster positive attitudes to work. This "context" created by the collective fosters the energies of every individual pupil. It may be that this "work context" (intellectual, moral, aesthetic and that connected with manual work) provides that very mechanism through which the collective brings influence to bear on the individual and the individual on the collective. The actions of the individual child are guided not by commands, demands, coercion, incentives or punishments but through the overall atmosphere of the collective which is one of moral uprightness, diligence and intellectual effort.

A few years ago a book was brought out in the United States entitled *Two Worlds of Childhood: US and USSR*. Its author, the well-known psychologist and sociologist Urie Bronfenbrenner, had made a painstaking comparative study of children in the two countries

using the latest sociological techniques: he pointed out that teenagers in the Soviet Union manifest higher moral qualities than their peers in the United States. In an effort to probe the secrets of Russian education Urie Bronfenbrenner elaborated a theory of imitation and modelling: he ascertains that the children he was studying found themselves face to face with models of approved behaviour and copy them. However it would seem that the term "modelling", despite its up-to-date ring, was not an accurate way to describe the mechanism of education and character-moulding under discussion. It is not the isolated model, nor pupils' comparison of themselves with "models", but precisely collective impulses in an overall creative atmosphere which influence the child, absorb him and steer his behaviour into a pedagogically expedient channel.

If a teacher has an opportunity to influence a child, to guide him, this does not mean that the education received will necessarily be of a positive, fruitful variety. Sukhomlinsky seeks to place the child in a position where he cannot fail to find enjoyment in work, to aspire to success, and to love learning for its own sake!

In this way Sukhomlinsky can be seen as the continuator of the principles of his great predecessor, the outstanding Soviet educationist, Anton Makarenko. There was a time when attempts were made to contrast the work of Sukhomlinsky and Makarenko, and indeed they still occur today. It has been maintained that Makarenko put forward the theory of educa-

tion through the collective, and Sukhomlinsky opted for education of the individual. However this contrasting of the two theories betrayed a highly superficial understanding of both Makarenko's and Sukhomlinsky's work.

History itself it seems is set on demonstrating to us the actual relationship between the two outstanding Soviet educationists. Sukhomlinsky graduated from the same institute of education as Makarenko in Poltava in the Ukraine (albeit after an interval of twenty years) and he started his teaching career the year that Makarenko died. They worked in settlements for railway workers at two adjoining stations, Kryukovo and Pavlysh, where commemorative museums have since been opened.

Sukhomlinsky wrote in his day: "There is no other teacher whose work I have admired and respected as much as Makarenko's. It was in his works that I sought true wisdom of which I was so desperately in need. All my modest experimentation in teaching has been the result of that search." Indeed not only was his experimentation the result of the search inspired by Makarenko's writings, but it also represented the elaboration and continuation of the truths he found in his predecessor's work.

The theory of education through the collective which is usually associated with the name of Makarenko and his book *The Road to Life* is the only educational theory of this century which has stood the test of time. It was sub-

jected to severe criticism, and many people claimed that education within the collective led to a levelling out of individuality. Yet as the years go by more and more people in many countries come to realise that at the present time no other type of education can be effective; Makarenko's works are continually being reprinted (recently a one-volume selection of his writings came out in the United States). Today it is impossible to educate young people outside the collective, and collective education does not in any way undermine individuality: on the contrary, precisely this type of education allows a child to develop all his abilities.

This was demonstrated conclusively by Sukhomlinsky, leaving no room for any doubt on the subject. This serves to explain why Sukhomlinsky's paradox can only be resolved within the children's collective. If a teacher is alone with the child he has no opportunity to truly absorb his interest and awaken new energies in him that will be adequate for new successes in learning to be scored and bring joy.

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If we were to spend a day in school picked at random anywhere in the world, there is no doubt that at some time during that day we should hear an angry teacher upbraiding one of her charges with the words: "How many times do I have to tell you?" or "D'you ever listen to what I say?"

Children never respond to angry words, whatever they might imply. Such words fail to penetrate their armour of emotional impassivity or "thick skin", to use Sukhomlinsky's phrase. A teacher's words in such a situation prove ineffective, they become nothing but a tedious exhortation.

Sukhomlinsky pointed to the only way out of such a situation. Before a child can be educated he has to be rendered educable. Before the teacher addresses himself directly to a child, it is essential that the child should be in a state in which he is capable of taking in the teacher's words. If a child is far from able, then his abilities must be fostered: indeed there is no other way. The same applies when it comes to moral guidance: harsh methods such as punishment or complaints to parents should be avoided, and instead energies should be concentrated on developing the pupil's capacity for listening to his teachers. A teacher who appreciates this will be more patient in relation to his pupils. Just as he should refrain from shouting at weak pupils and give them additional help instead, so he should stop himself shouting at pupils who do not pay attention, who are incapable of listening. There is no point in reproaching a child with a lack of sensitivity or scruples: instead patient work is required to foster his emotional responses and moral scruples, that very same emotional sensitivity which alone makes it possible for the teacher to make any headway with character training.



Now we come to one of the most important of Sukhomlinsky's principles: education through our sense of the beautiful. Our sense of the beautiful in Nature, in books and in people ennobles our minds: it helps a child to become sensitive to what is being said to him and to moral influences.

The practical bias in education, essential for the needs of the modern child, must be complemented by "impractical arts" otherwise that education will become too dry. The more businesslike and practical children are in their studies and at work, the more essential it is to educate them in understanding and appreciation of the beautiful. Otherwise businesslike application can easily degenerate into calculating greed, etc. . . .

Nowhere is patience so important for the teacher as in his work to foster pupils' sense of the beautiful. It is a simple undertaking to lead children out into a meadow and comment to them: "Look how beautiful it is here!" The children may nod in agreement but this in no way implies that they have really been struck by the beauty of the spring meadow. Sukhomlinsky recounted how it sometimes takes years before all of a sudden the all-important day and minute are at hand when, as a result of some coincidence or mood, a child's heart is suddenly aroused and filled with happiness when confronted with the beautiful. The teacher has to muster up vast reserves of patience and faith as he waits for that moment, believing that it will come and leading up to it.

It was pointed out earlier that Sukhomlinsky starts his teaching not in the classroom but outside in meadows or woodland. First he encourages his young charges to admire Nature and then works of art and finally their fellow-men and the latter's deeds. If a child fails to appreciate that people too are beautiful, how can he, in his turn, aspire to lead a beautiful life? Then again if a child lacks inspiration to strive after a beautiful life, how can he be educated in moral standards and academic subjects?

Sukhomlinsky maintained that a child can only be taught to love beauty through action and deeds. He must be taught not only to admire Nature but also to preserve its beauty; not only to admire beautiful deeds, but to emulate them. He wrote: "School is only worthy of that name, if the main subject taught in it is the Science of Man, when knowledge of the world starts out from knowledge of man's soul. . . ."

If a child performed a kind action, if he helped someone, or went without some kind of treat for the sake of a friend whose mother was ill, thousands of teachers would commend the deed. However for Sukhomlinsky the actual deed on its own was only half the story. For him just as important was the emotional response of the child at the time. Was he happy in doing good? Did he glean joy from doing good or did he only experience that, after his good deed had been singled out and commended.

Education of emotions can only be discussed in terms of emotions. Important results for the teacher are not deeds themselves but the excitement and emotional experience bound up with them.

Some teachers' attitude to the children in their care can be summed up in the primitive formula "let them lie low". If a pupil "lies low", does not call attention to himself through misdeeds, then the teacher is satisfied. It is difficult to appreciate who is steering the education process, who triggers off the educative influence. More often than not it is the "rule-breaker", for those who do not "break rules", simply go unnoticed by the teacher.

Sukhomlinsky and his colleagues were constantly aware of the children they were working with. Sukhomlinsky did not wait for misdemeanours but educated his charges by a completely different method, not with reference to violations of norms for moral behaviour, but by upholding those norms. He educated through reference not to misdeeds, but to deeds that were good and beautiful.

How did Sukhomlinsky lead a child into a world of goodness? As mentioned at the outset of this article, by way of the fairy-tale. He asked of the mothers who brought their children to his school that they should tell their children fairy-tales. He himself was constantly telling them and then started to listen to them with the children. When they reached the age of twelve or thirteen, when all children elsewhere were turning their backs on fairy-tales

for once and for all, Sukhomlinsky's pupils were still inventing them. At the Pavlysh school the children's fairy-tales were carefully collected and bound together in thick folders. The Kiev television studios have already transmitted a series of programmes entitled *Pavlysh Tales* consisting of these stories.

Who epitomises kindness in the eyes of small children? The figure of the old story-teller of course. When the children of Pavlysh first came to school it was just such a Story-teller who welcomed them. School soon became a magical and alluring place, welcoming and bewitching just like a magic fairy-tale.

After the fairy-tales came books. Sukhomlinsky observed long ago that children lose their bearings in an ordinary library and select the first thing they come across, making random choices. Guiding children's reading habits is an extremely difficult task. So often children automatically reject a book picked out for them by an adult. Sukhomlinsky made his pupils a library of a very different kind which he called the "Thinking Room".

It only contains three hundred books—three hundred of the finest works of world literature, to be read and reread! Sukhomlinsky made a point of persuading his pupils to reread their favourite books several times over. The authors represented range from Homer to Hemingway, and the children had at hand classics of oriental as well as Russian and Soviet literature. The atmosphere is one of reverent respect for these pearls of literature which inspires all

who enter with the hope that they will one day have read them all. Here again atmosphere and mood are all important, a distinctive "literary context" is provided, permeated with love for the written word. Rare is the child who does not succumb to it and start reading.

Lack of space prevents me from describing the musical activities at the school in Pavlysh and the lessons in art appreciation all of which occupy an important place in the school curriculum.

To summarise: all these means for enriching the children's lives—study, work, books, music, painting, wise advice from the teachers, the opinions and verdicts of the collective, parental influence channelled by the teacher—constitute a diversified arsenal which is exploited to the full. Whoever comes to this school, however lacking in talent he or she might be, there is never any doubt that a pupil will give up, or fail to find enjoyment in his lessons: by the time they reach the last, tenth class Sukhomlinsky's pupils answered the teacher just as eagerly as Class 1 pupils are wont to do.

Children who grew up in that school cannot fail to aspire after knowledge, creative work, goodness and beauty; they were bound to leave its doors as fine and interesting young people.

The question is often asked as to what the results of such education are and what distinguishes Sukhomlinsky's pupils from other schoolchildren. This is a very difficult question, for as yet no scales have been devised for measuring human virtues. All that can be said

on the subject perhaps is that many boys and girls from that village school succeed in entering universities in various parts of the country, that those who stay behind in their local village are prized as good workers, and that every ex-pupil from Sukhomlinsky's school has a library of his own at home. Finally, it is well known that no law-breakers have gone forth from that school.

Everyone who has ever worked with children knows that from time to time it starts to look as if everything he is doing is of no use to anyone, neither himself nor the children, that those who came to school intelligent remained intelligent and those who arrived stupid left it just as stupid. Teachers in this mood come to feel themselves overwhelmed by the impression that they are unable to come to terms with either the child's innate ability or the environment in which the child finds himself.

Sukhomlinsky succeeds in conveying faith in the potential of education to such doubting teachers. This is why his works are so eagerly read both by those who have ceased to believe in the role of the school, and by those who still believe in it. The former are anxious to restore their faith and the others to consolidate the faith they have not yet lost.

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By way of conclusion a few details concerning the modest and difficult life of this remarkable Soviet teacher would not be out of place

Vasily Sukhomlinsky was born in September

1918 not far from Pavlysh, in the district where he spent the whole of his life. His father was a peasant carpenter and apart from Vasily there were two other boys and a girl in the family. All four of them were to become teachers.

His childhood was a difficult one and food was often scarce in the home; when at the age of 15 Vasily set off to Kremenchug to embark on his studies his mother had nothing to give him for the journey other than a few potato scones and two glasses of fried soya beans.

Initially Sukhomlinsky started to train as a medical orderly but after his first visit to the morgue he ran out and resolved to take up teaching instead. He wrote verse at this period and not long ago the staff working for the children's journal *Pioneer* (published in Moscow) unearthed verses signed Vasya Sukhomlinsky in an old issue of the journal, which means he must have started having his work published at a very early age.

At the age of 17 Sukhomlinsky returned to his home and began to work as a primary teacher. While engaged in this work he completed a degree course as an external student of the Poltava Institute of Education. When the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) started, Sukhomlinsky enlisted at the first opportunity. His native village and the surrounding area were occupied by the fascist invaders. His eighteen-year-old wife Vera Povsha helped the partisans in the occupied area. She was captured by the Gestapo and while in a Nazi prison Vera

gave birth to a son. A Nazi officer brought the baby to Vera, when he was no more than a few days old and said that if she did not name the leader of the local partisan organisation they would kill her son. This was what happened and Vera Povsha after long days of torture was finally hanged.... This tragedy was a source of deep distress to Sukhomlinsky for the rest of his life. Shortly before his death he wrote in an account of her death: "I am filled with two emotions—love and hate. Love for children and hatred for fascism. My heart will always throb with anger, while at the same time I always feel the urge to hug all the children of our country, anxious that none of them should ever know grief or suffering.... Each day and each hour I go out of my way to foster humanity in children, that subtle ability to sense the complex pulsations of another's heart, another's soul."

At the time when that tragedy was being enacted in occupied Pavlysh, Sukhomlinsky himself was seriously wounded at the front near Moscow. In fact shell splinters in his chest were to be with him for the rest of his life. He was treated deep in the rear of the country in Udmurtia, and when he came out of hospital it turned out that he was no longer fit for active service after his wounds, while at the same time his home was still occupied by the Nazis.... Sukhomlinsky found a posting on the spot and started work as the director of a school in the very town where he had been undergoing treatment, namely Ufa. As soon



as the Ukraine was liberated he returned home and was put in charge of the district education department. Those were very difficult years that followed, for many schools had been destroyed during the war and not only were teachers in short supply but there were no textbooks or exercise books to be had either. At the same time the children had been robbed of their childhood by war, had not seen or known their fathers; they had run wild and grown bitter after all the horrors of occupation they had been through. It was during those years that Sukhomlinsky's theory of education took shape, a theory based on defence and protection of children. It was not the first situation of its kind in the history of education. Pestalozzi appeared on the scene in the wake of the Napoleonic wars, Makarenko right after the Civil War in Russia and now Sukhomlinsky after the Great Patriotic War. No one suffers more horribly in war than children and the need for teachers is great in times after war.

This was what led Sukhomlinsky, right from the start of his work to his last day, to write so much about children's grief and suffering and appeal to teachers to look long and searchingly in the eye of their pupils. He found children's grief something quite intolerable.

One day he was approached by a small girl in tears: her father had just left his family and some of the unkind children at the school were teasing her, saying that she now had no

father. Sukhomlinsky said to her: "I shall be your father. You can tell that to everyone: I am your father."

At that time he already had a family of his own, a wife, son and daughter, but he was incapable of giving any other answer.

In order to work more closely with children, Sukhomlinsky gave up his administrative work as early as 1947 and was sent to take charge of the school in Pavlysh, which has since become famous not only in the Soviet Union, but also in other countries.

After that the days that followed were very much like one another, year in, year out. . . . Every morning Sukhomlinsky would get up at four or five o'clock, set out from his flat in the school building and start work in the director's study, where he would be until eight o'clock thinking out his books and articles and writing away at them in his clear, small measured hand.

At eight o'clock he would leave his study and come out into the corridor to welcome the children. He was rarely absent from the school, even after he had been elected Corresponding Member of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, and he always hurried back home again after any absence. In the summer he would see all the other teachers leave for their holidays, while he himself stayed on at the school seeing to repairs and working away with the children in the school garden and vineyards. For the last few years of his life Sukhomlinsky knew he was dying; the shell

splinters in his chest were taking their toll after all, but no one ever heard him complain.

His colleagues recall how Sukhomlinsky would suddenly turn pale, clutch at his heart, get up and reel away towards his study. A few minutes later he would be back again. When asked what the matter was, he would bid everyone to ignore the incident, and the conversation would continue where it had left off. He strictly forbade his fellow-teachers to talk about illness or family tragedies in the staff-room.

That was how Sukhomlinsky worked for twenty years. The early morning was devoted to writing, during the middle part of the day he would give his own lessons and observe those of other teachers, then after school he would go for walks with his pupils and find time to receive enormous numbers of visitors. People used to travel thousands of kilometres to the school at Pavlysh, individually or in groups of as many as forty to fifty people—teachers, school directors, university lecturers, and educationists.

In the Pavlysh school, as indeed in any other, there was a special book set aside for the comments made by school inspectors on their statutory visits. Here are some of the entries from another book containing comments made by unofficial “voluntary” inspectors.

“I have only spent a single day in this remarkable and interesting school, but have learnt as much as I did as a student of education during four years.”

"I had read Sukhomlinsky's books before and have now seen with my own eyes all that appealed to me in his books. It has filled me with even more inspiration than before."

"The secondary school at Pavlysh should be reclassified as a university! This statement is made in all seriousness: anyone who feels at all involved with children or school education cannot but be filled with a sense of amazement and admiration."

A whole series of books flowed forth from Sukhomlinsky's pen. Initially he analysed the work of the teacher, concentrating first on one aspect of education and child care and then another: *Fostering the Collective Spirit among Schoolchildren* (1956), *Fostering a Communist Attitude to Work* (1959), *The Inner World of the Schoolchild* (1961), *Moulding of Personality in Soviet Schools* (1965). Towards the end of the sixties though he started summarising his ideas and incorporating them all into an overall theory of education. This attempt resulted in the big monograph entitled *Pavlysh Secondary School* (1969). That same year appeared another book by him, *I Give My Heart to Children*, concerned with the care and teaching of junior pupils. A sequel to this monograph dealing with teenagers *The Birth of a Citizen* came out a month after his death in 1970.

Sukhomlinsky had known that his death was not far away and was preparing himself for it. At that difficult time he wrote to a colleague in Moscow: "My health at the moment

is such that in a short time two splinters of metal which got stuck in my chest back in the war will shift a few millimetres nearer a blood vessel not far from my heart, and believe me, I am soberly prepared for what will happen next, although I must admit it would be better not to know about it all in advance.... Unfortunately I do, since the doctor has told me. A further operation is out of the question, for my heart would not stand the strain.

"I am anxious to achieve as much as possible in the time left me by these tiny splinters. I shall work all out to complete the most important tasks I have in hand, namely a number of as yet unfinished books."

A letter was also sent to a publishing house in Kiev that used to put out his works. It opened with the following words: "In view of my incurable illness and the unavoidable curtailment of my academic and teaching work in the near future", which were followed by instructions in a businesslike vein. At the end of his letter to the director of the publishing house Sukhomlinsky wrote: "Until my work as a writer and teacher is cut short I should be grateful if you would regard the contents of this letter as strictly confidential, for your eyes only. This is the most important condition of our collaboration."

"The unavoidable curtailment of academic and teaching work" was the brave and restrained understatement with which Sukhomlinsky referred to his death.

Sukhomlinsky was a Communist who believed that man is immortalised through his work and the people to whom he devotes his love, through his experience and most important of all through children. He held that the death of near relatives should not be concealed from children: "when a child's heart is confronted with the death of a loved one . . . this brings to life a new vision of life as such. In amazement a child suddenly discovers the true value of the very fact that he is alive, he feels, sees and revels in the joy of life and the attainment of knowledge."

Sukhomlinsky the teacher approached death—and even his own—first and foremost as a teacher.

The whole of Pavlysh and all the pupils and staff from his school turned out to take their leave of Sukhomlinsky at his funeral, together with vast numbers of people who assembled there on that occasion. So that the youngest pupils should not be crushed in the crowd the Class 10 pupils formed a ring round them and led them at the head of the procession. The whole of the road from the village club-house to the cemetery was strewn with flowers. Small boys and girls walked down the carpet of flowers followed by their teacher. So even in death Sukhomlinsky remained close to his school and now lies beside it for ever. The street on which his school stands has been named after him and naturally the school as well.

After his death the flow of visitors to Pavlysh continued unabated, indeed it swelled.

Visitors are received at the school by Nikolai Kodak, a friend and collaborator of Sukhomlinsky's who worked for eighteen years as the director of a nearby school. The teachers of the Pavlysh school were allowed to choose the school's director to follow Sukhomlinsky and it was Kodak they turned to. Everyone was anxious that the atmosphere of the school, indeed everything about it, should always remain as it had been in Sukhomlinsky's day: each small detail of the school's life has assumed special significance since Sukhomlinsky's death, as so often happens in such cases, and each word the famous teacher spoke and wrote is studied with the utmost care.

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In this book the reader is presented with a selection of extracts from Sukhomlinsky's main works and articles. It goes without saying that a collection of this kind can in no way take the place of study of the works themselves. Selected material of this type may well appear to be lacking logical threads linking adjacent paragraphs, which the reader must supply for himself. Yet meanwhile every effort has been made not only to preserve the overall logic of Sukhomlinsky's thought process and theoretical searchings, but indeed to underline them particularly emphatically.

*Simon Soloveichik*

# I

## EDUCATION AND THE EDUCATOR

### I Am a Firm Believer in the Great Power of Education

The notebooks I have kept throughout my teaching career total three thousand seven hundred pages and each one of those pages is devoted to one person and one person only—my pupil.

Three thousand seven hundred lives. . . . Almost the whole of the adult population in our village. Recently I felt the urge to leaf through those pages. . . . Each of the children described was a world unto himself quite unique.

It would be the worst possible punishment for me if a young man or woman had figured in my life without leaving any mark on my mind or heart. If a child leaves his teacher's charge a faceless, grey individual, this means you as a teacher have failed to give him anything. Surely that is the saddest outcome for any teacher. For everything that goes by the name of education is a wondrous recreation of oneself in Man. (24)\*

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\* At the end of this collection there is a list of the books, journals and newspapers from which the ex-



What has been the most important thing in my life? Without hesitation I reply to that question: *my love for children.* (10, 3)

The alpha and omega of my teaching creed has been my profound belief that what a man is depends upon his particular vision of happiness. (29)

Truly communist education is first and foremost concern for real human happiness, that is life in the name of an idea, an ideal. (29)

I see my educator's mission as the stimulation of intellectual energy, the presentation of Lenin to my senior pupils as an example to be emulated. Seeking after knowledge in a Leninist spirit and setting store by knowledge in that same spirit are principles fundamental to the education of social and political awareness in our schools. (12, 226)

The ideas of the Great October Socialist Revolution are the source of one of the New Man's most important and valuable moral qualities—his orientation towards the future. (7, 80)

In the man we are seeking to educate there should be side by side moral integrity, a rich

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tracts have been taken. The first figure refers to the title and the second to the issue of the journal, or the page of the book.

cultural background and physical perfection. The skill and art of education consists in a constant, vivid mindfulness of the essence of that harmony. Communist man is not a mechanical combination of all good features and qualities, but a merging together of the latter in a harmonious unity.

... The easier life becomes, the more material and cultural benefits become accessible to the younger generation, ... the harder work in education will be, the more responsibility will lie with all involved in education. ... (2, 143)

Childhood is the most vital period of man's life; it is not preparation for adult life to come, but a real, vivid, unique life all of its own. The kind of man the child of today turns into is determined above all by the kind of childhood he had, the people who guided his early steps through life, and the experience of the world around him which imprinted itself on his mind and heart. (10, 11)

Childhood is a day-by-day discovery of the world. It is important that this discovery should be above all a discovery of a child's fellow-men and his Homeland, that the beauty inherent in a real Man, and the greatness and incomparable beauty of the Homeland imprint themselves on his mind and heart. (29)

There is nothing richer or more complex in this world than the human being. The all-

round development of the individual and his moral perfection make up the goal of communist education. The path leading to attainment of this goal is as complex as man himself. (24)

Discussion of the lives of concrete pupils led us to consider *harmony of educational influences*. In my view this is one of the most important underlying factors in education practice. The essence of this question can be summed up as follows: the educational effectiveness of every means of influencing the individual depends on how well-thought out, purpose-directed and effective other means of influence are. The power of beauty as an educational influence depends on how skilfully work is used as an educational means, on the degree and detail with which education of the mind and emotions has been thought out. A teacher's words become an educative force only when they are complemented by the personal example of elder people, when all other educational means are steeped in moral purity and nobility of spirit.

There are tens, hundreds, even thousands of interdependences and mutually determining links between the various educational influences. The effectiveness of education in the long run depends on whether and in how far these interdependences and links are taken into account, or, to be more precise, on how they are applied in practice. (10, 213)

Any influence on the individual loses its power if it is not effected side by side with hundreds of other influences; any pattern is reduced to nothing if it does not proceed parallel to hundreds of others. The science of education is obsolescent in as far as it fails to investigate the dozens, indeed hundreds of interdependences and mutually determining links between influences brought to bear on the individual pupil. It becomes a genuine and precise science only when it investigates and elucidates the infinitely subtle and complex interdependences and links between educational phenomena. (10, 214)

Mechanical unthinking conversion of a theoretical proposition into a practical experiment serves to emasculate a teacher's vital ideas, robbing educational work of that which constitutes its core, its very soul—namely the unique nature of the phenomena in the life around us, the joy of renewal which each new generation of pupils brings the teacher, the essential urge to create.

Theory remains a source of inspiration for the teacher to expand and develop his skills, until it assumes a *life of its own* in practical experience. Once theory lives it must of necessity become enriched, perfect itself, for life will bring out new facets in it and discard that which is outdated, that has lived out its time. While theory lives in practical experiment, in the creative individual work of thousands upon thousands of teachers, it develops. If the-

oretical precepts are regarded as something eternal and unchanging, universally applicable, then they become ossified. (28)

What in fact really is the education or learning process? It has three ingredients: scientific knowledge, skill and art. . . . Education in the wide sense is a many-faceted process of constant spiritual enrichment and renewal both for those being educated and those who educate. In this process many phenomena acquire widely differing implications in individual cases: any educational idea that is apt in one case, can be of neutral significance in a second one, or even absurd in a third. Such is the nature of our work in education. (13, 9)

If no scientific predictions were made, if no one succeeded in planting in man those seeds which will only bear fruit decades later, education would be turned into primitive supervision, teachers would be nothing but illiterate child-minders and the science of education mere quackery. Scientific forecasts are important; indeed they are essential to the education process and the more subtle and thoughtful these forecasts, the less unforeseen catastrophes there will be. (12, 50)

Every moment of life and every patch of earth are educationally important, every person encountered by the individual in his formative years, even those encountered by chance, or in passing as it were. (14, 2)

The intellectual and emotional world of the child should not be thought of as classroom activity and no more. If we go out of our way to see to it that all a child's intellectual and emotional input are absorbed in lessons, then his life becomes intolerable. He must be not just a schoolchild, but first and foremost a person with a wide variety of interests, needs and aspirations. (34)

I am firmly convinced that the most precise definition would be the following: the educational process finds expression in a coming together of the spiritual life of the teacher and his pupils, in the unity of their ideals, aspirations, interests, ideas and experiences. (13, 11)

Tens and hundreds of threads between the minds and emotions of teacher and pupil are the tiny paths which lead to the human heart; they are the vital precondition for friendship, for comradeship between teacher and pupil. I and my colleagues go out of our way to ensure that teacher and pupils should share interests and aspirations; provided that this community of interests exists, children soon forget that their teacher is a supervisor and mentor.

If a teacher has once become a child's friend, and if this friendship is enhanced by some absorbing and noble interest, positive, sensible aspirations then a child's heart will remain free of any evil. And if there are children in a school who are on their guard, oversensitive to criticism, and mistrustful, and sometimes even malicious children, this is only

because teachers did not get to know them properly, did not find the right approach and failed to get through to them. Education without ties of friendship between teacher and pupil, without shared interests is a futile exercise. (9, 78)

In this hobby group for constructing mechanical models I am not the supervisor, but just another pupil and workman like all the children. What a fine feeling that is to be the children's comrade and friend, to take pleasure in their success, listen to the justified comments of the real craftsman, if something fails to work out. When children see in you one of their equals, they open out and confide things they would never have mentioned, if they only saw their teacher as a supervisor (9, 77).

Learning to love children is something that cannot be achieved in any educational establishment, or with the help of textbooks; this ability takes shape in the process of the individual's participation in the life of society, of his interrelating with other people. Indeed by its very nature work as a teacher—daily contact with children—deepens our love for man, our faith in him. Vocation for the teaching profession develops inside the school, during the process of teaching. (11, 25)

It is only possible to be a good teacher for the man who is a good educator. . . . If there is no concern with broad education of the

whole individual, then all teaching techniques and knowledge of education theory are nothing but ballast. (2,75)

I always went out of my way to convince teachers that if they only set eyes on their pupils when seated at their teacher's desk, if their pupils only come up to them when called upon to answer questions, if their conversation with the teacher only consists of answers to his questions, then no knowledge of psychology whatever can be of any help. A child must be welcomed as a friend, a like-minded friend with whom to share the joys of victory and the sorrow of loss. (11, 33)

During the first years of my work as a teacher I realised that school in the true sense of the word is not only a place where children acquire knowledge and skills. Study is very important, but it is not the only sphere of a child's intellectual and emotional life. The closer the study I made of what we have come to call the education or learning process, the more I have grasped that school in the true sense of the word is the many-faceted emotional and cultural life of the children's collective in which the educator and those to be educated are linked together by a multitude of interests and preoccupations. (10, 6)

Study is only one petal of that flower known as education, education in the wider sense of the word. In education there is nothing more,



or less, important, just as no petal of a flower is set apart among all those which make up its beauty. In education everything is of paramount importance—lessons, development of children's diverse interests outside lesson-time, and the relationships between pupils within the collective. (10, 8)

Each of us must be not an abstract embodiment of educational wisdom, but a living individual helping young people to attain closer knowledge of not only the world, but of themselves as well. The kind of people boys and girls see us to be, is a factor of decisive importance. We have to set them an example of a rich inner life; only then are we morally justified in seeking to educate. Nothing amazes or absorbs young people so much, nothing awakens the desire to learn so forcefully as a clever, intellectually stimulating and generous person. In our pupils there slumber talented mathematicians and physicists, philologists and historians, biologists and engineers, skilled craftsmen at the work-bench and plough. These talents will only come to fruition when boys and girls find in those who educate them that "life-giving water" without which those talents will wilt and fade. Mind is fostered by mind, conscience by conscience, devotion to one's country by effective service to this country. (12, 114)

School becomes the centre of children's intellectual and emotional life, if teachers give

lessons that are interesting in both form and content. . . . Yet remarkable brilliant lessons are to be found wherever there are other remarkable things apart from lessons, where a host of opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their various abilities outside lessons and are used to the full. (14, 4)

The word *education* is uttered dozens of times in every school every day. The subject of education is being pondered and discussed more and more in homes and public organisations. Yet do all teachers, let alone all parents, have a clear idea of what education is and, consequently, how it should be achieved? (14, 2)

I once came across a survey on the work of a school drawn up by an inspector from a district education department. It was noted that lessons were being conducted on an "appropriate level", that the pupils had attained a satisfactory degree of knowledge but that the general behaviour of the pupils left much to be desired. . . . Mothers or fathers often complain to their children that they have been "taught well, but brought up badly". (14, 2)

In both instances we find ourselves up against a one-sided view of upbringing or education in the broader sense as something separate from instruction. Can we accept the view that upbringing in the narrow sense of

the word has nothing to do with instruction and teaching, but does include the formation of pupil's world outlook and moral attitudes, the shaping of aesthetic taste and physical development? (14, 2)

What does "upbringing in the narrow sense of the word" mean? Can a world outlook be formed separately from the processes of teaching and instruction? Can an individual's mind and emotions be influenced with no reference to what he sees, learns, discovers, grasps in the process of learning? On the other hand, the learning process is surely unthinkable divorced from the formation of the individual's world outlook? (14, 2)

However interesting and purpose-directed children's school education might be, it should not be confined to preparation for school leaving exams. The transition from study to work is the most serious of all those steps to be undertaken by boys and girls on the threshold of adulthood. It is precisely at the initial stage of their working lives that work to foster positive attitudes and standards assumes prime importance. (5, 105)

I am a firm believer in the great power of education—in that which Nadezhda Krupskaya and Makarenko and other outstanding educationists believed in. (10, 4)

## The Need to Understand the Workings of the Child's Heart

There are no more humane professions than those of the doctor and the teacher. A doctor fights for a man's life up till the last moment, never letting the patient feel that his condition is serious or even hopeless. That is a fundamental principle of medical ethics. We teachers must develop and foster educational ethics in our collectives, we must *uphold the humanist principle in education* as the most important feature of the pedagogical training and skill of each teacher. For many, very many teachers the backward child is a tightly closed book. If a teacher cannot see into a child's heart, and understand his own particular thought patterns and way of looking at the world around him, any talk of sensitivity is futile; without knowledge of a child's heart no teaching training or scientific school organisation can have any effect. (13, 11)

Children set infinite store by their ideas of right and wrong, of honesty and dishonesty, of human dignity; they have their own criteria of beauty, even their own sense of time, for a child a day can seem like a year and a year a whole eternity. Possessed of access to that fairy-tale palace that we call *childhood*, I always believed it was essential to become a child myself in a certain sense. Only then will children look upon you as someone other than a person who has accidentally strayed into the

gates of their fairy-tale world, who watches over that world while remaining indifferent to what goes on inside it. (10, 4)

It is not sentimentality, when a child thinks that a toy car with a broken wheel suffers as much pain as a wounded fledgling—it is responsiveness, the very foundation of kindness and poetic imagination. (14, 6)

Children know anxieties, disappointments, worries and disasters—both large and small—all of their own. A teacher responsive to emotion will notice at once if something is not right with a child. This we can see first and foremost from a child's eyes. After realising there is something the matter with a child the sensitive teacher will not start asking questions at once. Meanwhile he will light on some means for making the child realise or feel that he, the teacher, is aware of the pupil's concern. Later questions can be asked when the other pupils are not present. If a teacher has once realised that a child is in need of help, to remain impervious or even forget about it would be to deal the pupil yet another blow. (13, 3)

Sometimes a child takes offence over matters that may appear trivial to the adult, for example, when someone hides his toy.... However, we have to remember that children have their own scale by which to measure joy and sorrow, right and wrong. The sensitive

teacher never forgets that he too has been a child. The teacher has to put himself in the child's place, share his sorrow and help him. Often the most valued and welcomed help for a child is sympathy, compassion and sincere understanding. Meanwhile apathetic indifference can shatter a child. . . . (13, 3)

Until a child has learnt to revel in childish joys, until a genuine thrill has lit up in his eyes, until a little boy has indulged in childish pranks, I have no right to claim any educative influence has been brought to bear. A child must be a child. . . . If when listening to a fairy-tale he is not carried away by the struggle between the powers of good and evil, if his eyes express casual indifference instead of radiating excitement, then something in that child's heart has been trampled on, and considerable energy will be required to put it right. (10, 32)

There is a chord in the secret corner of every child's heart, which strikes a note of its own and so as to make a child's heart respond to my words, my heart has to be in tune with that note. I have observed on several occasions, what desperate worries can afflict a child's heart, when he is agitated, disappointed and his worries go unnoticed by those taking care of him. Will I be able to sense what is preoccupying my pupils each day? What is going on in their hearts? Will I always be fair with the children in my care. (10, 83)

Fairness is the basis for a child's trust in his educator. However, there is no such thing as abstract fairness outside individuals, outside personal interests, passions and urges. In order to be fair a teacher must have an intimate knowledge of each child's inner world. This is why as a child made his way up the school, I came to regard education as none other than an increasingly profound awareness of each child. (10, 83)

The more I got to know my future charges, the more I realised that one of my important goals that lay ahead was to restore childhood to those children who had been deprived of it at home. . . .

I knew several such children and life has convinced me that if a small child does not succeed in recapturing his faith in what is right and fair, he will never feel himself a real human being, or regain his sense of self-respect. Pupils of this type become bitter and resentful in their teens; for them there is nothing sacred or lofty in life and teachers' words never penetrate more than skin-deep.

To correct a youth of that type is one of the hardest tasks that ever confronts the educator; the subtle, painstaking work involved represents the supreme test in our understanding of man. To possess this understanding requires not only the ability to see and feel how a child apprehends what is right and wrong but also the ability to protect a vulnerable child's heart against that wrong. (10, 17)

As a child each one of us has need of sympathy and kindness. If a child grows up in an atmosphere of heartlessness he, in his turn, will be indifferent to goodness and beauty. School cannot fully take the place of the family, in particular a child's mother, but if a child is deprived of kind concern, warmth and care at home, we teachers must be particularly attentive to his needs. (10, 78)

When I welcome my pupils each day, I look into their faces. A child's sad eyes are the most difficult thing we have to face in the complex process of education. If a child's heart is filled with grief then he is only physically present in the classroom. He is like a taut string, and any careless touch can cause him pain. Each child reacts to suffering in his own way: some find relief in kind sympathy, whereas kind words only add to the pain for others. In such situations a teacher's skill depends first and foremost on his understanding of his fellow-men. He must learn to spare a heart that is filled with grief, how to avoid adding to his charge's sorrow, and avoid rubbing salt in his wounds. When overwhelmed with grief and bewildered, a pupil cannot of course take part in lessons as usual; his grief leaves its mark on his mind. The golden rule for the teacher is to be ever sensitive to children's grief and suffering. He must be able to apprehend and respond to what is going on in a child's heart. His ability to respond to a child's sorrow, to understand and sense what



is going on in a child's heart is the very foundation of his teaching skill. (10, 201)

First and foremost a teacher must understand a child's heart. This is something that cannot be learnt with the help of any special devices. This particular skill is only found in teachers with rich emotional and moral resources of their own. (10, 201)

There is no doubt that giant schools are an undesirable way of organising the work of education. I for one am worried when I see architects' plans for schools catering for 2,200 pupils and over. In large schools with over a thousand children, I should recommend that steps be taken to create special conditions to ensure a warm, "family" atmosphere; for example, each collective should contain paralled classes, an arrangement which would serve to keep down noise, rushing about and hustling. This is an elementary requirement for good teaching. (13, 8)

If I was asked what was the most difficult thing about my work, I should reply talking to a child about his father and mother. The slightest indiscretion, awkwardness or inaccuracy can lead to disastrous results. (18)

Situations can arise when a child feels as if he has a knife at his throat: he is terror-struck and goes cold all over. This sensation occurs when intimate family relationships are laid

bare which a child would rather conceal or hide.

This is why I should like to say to fathers: realise and remember that your failures and degradation are experienced by your children as their sorrow, your joys are shared by them as their own. Preserve your child's love for his fellow-men, strengthen his faith in man. (18)

The path from childhood to adolescence should be one of *joy and cheerfulness*: this is one of the most important rules underlying the whole of our system of education. Joy as a source for a child's optimistic confidence in his own abilities is a condition for the wealth of actual relationships with the surrounding world, without which there can be no intellectual and moral development. . . . (6, 33)

I always feel a sense of deep regret when I think of the large number of schools where backward pupils obliged to repeat a year are sitting way back like so many wretched outcasts, frustrated or just indifferent to everything around them. It is an inexcusable state of affairs if they leave school embittered by their encounter with learning, or indifferent to it altogether. If a mentally sound individual achieved no success in any subject and has no favourite subject then the school itself must be at fault. (14, 8)

Those who understand by a humane approach a teacher's even, controlled tone dis-

guising exhortations in a syrup of kindness are profoundly misled. Kindness is not a question of tone and specially selected words. The born educator is always someone capable of a wide range of emotions; his joy, disappointment, anxiety and indignation all run deep. If children sense that their mentor's emotions are genuine—then they are being shown real kindness. (13, 3)

The true educator seldom appeals to his charges to "be good". His pupils sense the kindness of his heart in his upright truthfulness and profound sincerity. Kindness is in essence truthfulness, which is by no means always pleasant. Often truth can be bitter or worrying, for it can humiliate and disappoint. Yet even the most bitter of truths implants in a child's heart the urge to be good, because kindness by its very nature never debases human dignity. (13, 3)

The great Russian educationist Konstantin Ushinsky wrote it is possible deeply to love someone whom we are living beside all the time without realising it, until some great misfortune brings out the depth of our attachment; it is possible to live out your whole life and never know how deeply you were attached to your native land unless some chance occasion, like a long absence, suddenly pinpoints that love in all its power. I recall those words every time I go for a long time without seeing children, without being able to observe their joys

and disappointments. Every year I grew more and more convinced that one of the all-important aspects of a teacher's ability is his sense of attachment to children. Yet if feelings cannot be ordered about, to use Stanislavsky's phrase, at least it can be said that fostering emotions in the teacher and educator is the essential concern of educational science. (10, 10)

### **Fostering a Sense of Involvement in Work**

Imagine the result if a musician were to take up an untuned violin and start playing. . . . Obviously nothing would come of it (indeed no musician worth his salt would ever attempt to play on an untuned instrument). Yet in schools we encounter the strange phenomenon of large numbers of teachers trying to educate those who do not respond to education. Education involves first and foremost singling out and fostering the individual pupil's receptiveness for education. The ability to *be educated* involves a sensitive heart, the pupil's sensitive response to every nuance of a teacher's words, his looks, gestures, smiles, pensive moods and silences. . . . (20)

A humane approach to a child implies appreciation by the teacher of the simple and wise truth to the effect that without a strong inner drive or aspiration on the part of the child, without his desire to be good schools, or

indeed education as such, are unthinkable. A true master of the art of teaching can be seen to urge his pupils on, steer them the way he wants them to go, even compel them to do so; yet all this is done in such a way that the little spark of a child's own desire to be good never dies away. . . . The born teacher even when reproaching a child or expressing dissatisfaction, or giving vent to his anger (teachers like any other emotionally developed, educated people have the right to be angry now and again), always remembers that he must not stifle the child's idea that there is a goal still to be sought after, a goal that must be attained at all costs. (13, 3)

My view of education is such that every contact between the educator and the educated should in the final analysis serve to foster a sense of involvement in work. The more subtle and gentle that sense is, the greater the powers that will emerge from the depths of a child's heart and the greater the extent to which the young individual will educate himself. (21)

Every thoughtful teacher knows how deeply a pupil's self-respect is wounded, even in Class 1, if he comes to learn that others around him have a lower opinion of him than he deserves. In the opposite situation, if a child realises and senses that a teacher and children's collective are aware of and appreciate his particular merits he will go out of his way to become better still. Indeed the whole secret of the teach-

ing craft lies in keeping alive in children this inclination and moral effort. No educator can implant good in a child's heart if the child himself is not aspiring in that direction. Yet this aspiration is only to be found, when the teacher and other pupils see first and foremost the good there is in a child. (5, 12)

The very nature and foundations of our society demand that the main tie between educator and his charge should be two sincere desires: the pupil's desire to *grow* better and the teacher's desire to *see* the pupil better than he already is at the given moment. (12, 32)

The reason for a teacher's helplessness when faced by a difficult pupil, or indeed even that of a whole school collective, does not lie in the fact that the pupil is beyond improvement, but that the actual education process is not proceeding along the right path: the educator is endeavouring only to *root out* defects or better still to forestall their appearance. Experience (in many cases *bitter* experience) has shown that is not the way to foster enduring moral convictions. . . . From the day he arrives at school it is vital to perceive and tirelessly to consolidate and develop a child's positive potential. (5, 4-5)

The way to a child's heart is not a clear, even path along which the careful hand of the teacher only removes the weeds or defects, but it leads over fertile field on which the shoots

of moral qualities have to take root. . . . Defects uproot *themselves*, disappear without a child even noticing it and their eradication is not accompanied by any unfortunate side effects, if they are ousted by a hardy sprout of good qualities. (5, 5)

I take pride in my teacher's creed: my favourite pupils are not the obedient and demure ones, ready to agree with me at every turn and always comply, but the strong-minded, restless ones, with a will of their own, who sometimes get up to all sorts of mischief but fight against wrong and falsehood and are ready to go to any lengths to uphold their principles which are intrinsic to their very being. How carefully we should preserve and cherish those seeds of character that are almost imperceptible at first glance but which enhance readiness to engage in courageous and compromising work, to uphold the truth and noble causes. (21)

It is vital to preserve and cherish youthful spontaneity and fervour. This means that in educational work the utmost attention and tact must be shown with regard to mistakes or hasty actions and decisions resulting from the emotional intensity of young people's ideas. These mistakes never have any bearing on what is most important and most precious, on what concerns matters of principle. As a rule they are connected with trivialities, and their significance should not be exaggerated. . . . The

ardour of youth's refusal to be reconciled with shortcomings, particularly those of the moral variety, should not be quenched, should not be stifled. (6, 171)

In order to become a man worth his salt, a pupil must first and foremost respect himself, for without that respect, without admiration of what is fine within himself there can be no integrity or intolerance of all that debases man. There is no need to shun the word "self-love": it is not the same as self-adulation but pride and faith in the good potential within himself. Literature should thus aim at awakening man's sense of dignity within him, interest and respect for inner humane experience both in others and in oneself. (14, 8)

Without self-respect the individual is bereft of moral purity or intellectual fibre. Self-respect, a sense of honour, pride and dignity provide the whetting stone for emotional sensitivity. . . . But in order to bring out self-respect in a young person, the educator himself must entertain deep respect for the personality of his charge. (14, 2)

Some teachers are anxious to eradicate their pupils' shortcomings by direct means, that might appear the most forceful: they make an example of children's weaknesses in the hope that they will become critical of their own behaviour, "come to their senses" and try to mend their ways. However in the overwhelm-



ing majority of cases this method proves unsuccessful. This approach to a child exposes and wounds him where he is at his most sensitive and vulnerable: his pride, self-esteem and sense of dignity are all at stake. Naturally a child starts to defend himself particularly when he has the impression that his sorrow will be a source of pleasure to his teacher.

Occasionally when a child feels an adult has no respect for him and he has no means of demonstrating his moral dignity, he will seek for ways of calling attention to himself. Often this results in reprehensible behaviour. (5, 14)

The desire to shine in the classroom and in creative work is a commendable human characteristic, which teachers must go out of their way to foster in their charges. The teachers at our school go out of their way to ensure that every pupil at some stage of his intellectual and moral development experienced the joy of coming first—an unrivalled moment in the life of schoolchildren.

All of us need moral support and particularly those who as a result of the most diverse possible circumstances feel themselves to be mediocrities. There will not be such things as mediocrities at school, and hence no wretched men and women in adult life if those involved in education have the wisdom to “dig down”, to dig to the creative potential to be found in every pupil, and if carefully chosen words give rise to competition in creative abilities. (14, 12)

We spared the feelings of adolescent pupils by avoiding comparisons, telling pupils that some were doing well and others badly. Assessing the intellectual performance of pupils with varying abilities demands considerable tact. Our assessment of levels of knowledge attained by pupils took into account the desire of every pupil to progress, his trust in us teachers, and his faith in us. (12, 192)

A child gleans moral strength to overcome his weaknesses (including backwardness in any particular subject) from his successes and, to be more precise, from that sphere of activity in which he is best able to come into his own and manifest his spiritual strength. I see our role as educators to lie first and foremost in the ability to pick out what is positive in every child and see to it that the school curriculum places no fetters on development of that potential, and to encourage his independent work, his creativity. (5, 93)

A child should never be reproached with his age or physical strength as unfortunately is the case with some teachers. ("You're a big strapping lad now, taller than your mother, so why are you lagging behind?")

Pupils themselves are perfectly well aware of their strength and potential, and the merest hint of reproach with regard to these characteristics of theirs, more often than not, has a deeply depressing effect.

Quite different tactics should be adopted: pupils' pride in their strength should be fostered, and when they encounter certain difficulties, in their studies for instance, they should be encouraged and lent confidence in their ability to overcome them. Precisely through manifestation of respect for elder boys' and girls' intellectual and physical abilities and acknowledgement of their maturity, teachers should indicate their acceptance of them as adults. (6, 169)

It is important to be aware of certain pitfalls inherent in the very logic of the teaching process: teaching involves constant daily checking of the successes scored by one pupil against those scored by others. This can lead to the dangers of disappointment, loss of confidence, introversion, indifference and resentment, in other words those changes of character which lead to coarsening of the mind, and a loss of sensitivity.... Sometimes teachers are surprised when pupils respond to their kind words with curt indifference, as if misinterpreting their friendliness? This is because such pupils' minds have been coarsened, hardened by mistrust, suspicion, constant jabs at their most vulnerable weak spot—namely their self-esteem. Reproaches of the type: "Your friend deserves an A and you won't get more than a C" or "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, have you no self-respect?" may not actually be uttered but implications in the same vein are often in the air. Constant allusions to self-

esteem serve to blunt and stifle it; a young person's heart will be slowly encased in ice as it were. Attempts to penetrate such hearts with kind words are as fruitless as efforts to warm a thick slab of ice by clasping it in warm hands. (12, 191)

How can these pitfalls of teaching practice be avoided? We were always loath to let an adolescent feel that we have no faith in him, because as soon as he realises that, he will learn the art of deceiving both his teachers and parents and become a past master at it. This lack of faith brings on mental paralysis, as it were, in the adolescent, making him incapable of independent decisions or exerting his will-power to overcome difficulties. He will develop the habit of doing things only at gun-point. We used to rely on pupils' inner moral fibre. We did not stand over our pupils or lead them by the hand, but left them freedom of choice, and then they would start to choose what we had been waiting for: they made a supreme effort of will and overcame difficulties, enhancing their self-respect in the process. (12, 191)

I and my colleagues agreed (and always stood by the decision) that if one of the pupils failed to carry out an assignment because he did not understand some thing, he should not be overwhelmed at once by a poor mark into the bargain. We made a point of not giving low marks at all. The implications of the

stance we adopted were as follows: "If you have not understood yet, work a bit more, think hard, and then cope on your own with the assignment you should have completed with the rest of the class." The young people repaid us with sincere frankness and diligence for our trust. Such teacher-pupil relationships would be an unattainable dream, if the *whole spirit* of the school did not foster in the elder pupils a sense of their own dignity and self-respect. I must stress again that in the classroom alone it is impossible to achieve such good relations. . . . (12, 191)

Superficiality and outward show breed hypocrites. Yet there is a more subtle veiled manifestation of that evil, namely deliberate premeditation, artificiality of the teaching situation. This occurs when young pupils sense that the teacher is talking to them not because he finds it interesting to do so, but because he has to carry through a specific teaching assignment, have it ticked off the list so to speak. Elder pupils always sense this situation without fail, and cannot abide such teaching.

That is one of the major evils of many schools nowadays. I would call it the "ass's ears" of any teaching enterprise. Those unfortunate ears are bound to prick up however much effort is made to disguise them with a fine head-dress of "educational exercise". Once a boy or a girl has sensed deliberate calculation in what is being said to him, and has realised that he is being talked to specifically so as to promote

his education—then his mental blinkers come down once and for all. (13, 7)

There is no doubt that the effectiveness of any teaching method decreases once a child becomes aware of the teacher's objective. This undeniable truth I take as the starting point for fostering teaching skill, the foundation of the ability to find the way to children's hearts, to approach them so that anything in which they become involved becomes an inner need, passion and dream, so that the teacher should remain their comrade and like-minded friend. (11, 15)

I always tried to inspire senior pupils with the idea of serving their people by telling them about Lenin and his ideas. I maintained that supreme happiness for the individual was to fight for something more important than his personal interests. (12, 226)

### **One of the Most Difficult Tests for the Teacher**

The most subtle means for influencing the formation of a young mind are in my opinion *words and beauty*. There was a time when schools were being criticised for setting too much store by literary pursuits. This criticism (echoes of which can still be heard today) was a misunderstanding. I was greatly surprised at it. . . . Lack of correct, well-directed education

through words in certain schools gives rise to many problems. It is impossible to consolidate a pupil's emotional sensitivity and his belief in morally upstanding relationships without a good grounding in language and literature. (22)

A teacher who knows how to speak to his charges possesses the indispensable skill of intellectual and emotional influence. The art of education involves first and foremost the art of speaking, addressing oneself to the emotions. I am firmly convinced that many conflicts in schools which all too often end in catastrophe can be traced to a teacher's failure to talk meaningfully to his pupils. (14, 12)

The effectiveness of a teacher's address to his pupils lies in the truthfulness of his words. Pupils are extremely sensitive and responsive to the truthfulness of their teacher's words. Children are even more sensitive to false, hypocritical words. (14, 12)

Poor teaching can often be traced to the teacher's knowledge of a mere two or three objectives when he addresses his pupils: sanction, prohibition, censure. For skilled teachers addressing their charges can involve a great deal of different objectives and one of the most frequent is the *exposition* of moral truths, concepts and standards. (14, 12)

We hold that communist ideology presupposes respect for man. The translation of this

concept into concrete standards and rules for school education demands considerable teaching skill and ability. (14, 4)

Dear reader, I do not intend to leave you with the impression that I am against commands, demands or discipline in education. Without reasonable expression of the teacher's will and the demands of the collective and society, education would be pure chaos and the teacher's words nothing but some syrup of abstract kindness. . . . Young people respect, love and set store by those who possess strong will and cannot endure spineless individuals and idle chatter. These sentiments are the wise truths and golden rules of our education system. I would warn against the reprehensible and impermissible state of affairs, however, when a school atmosphere consists of nothing but orders and demands and the individual wishes of the boys and girls are ignored. The skill of the teacher's volitional influence upon his pupils' minds makes itself felt when pupils, aware of their duty, willingly give themselves orders and set themselves standards. The teacher impresses and inspires by his moral example of a sense of duty. . . . (12, 105)

For the pupil to understand correctly and listen in a dignified way to bitter, yet justified truth from an elder is very hard and to achieve such behaviour requires patience and perseverance on the part of the teacher. . . . We teachers are often required to express disap-



proval or censure with dozens or even hundreds of different nuances: it should be done in such a way that the pupil feel prepared to reveal his feelings to us rather than bottle them up, rather than see our bitter words as prejudice. If asked what was the most vital secret of all in our profession, the secret on which the ability to win hearts and minds depended, I should reply the ability to foster the right attitude to criticism and disapproval. (31)

In no way do I rule out the use of "no's" in education. . . . Many shortcomings stem precisely from the fact that people are not taught from early childhood to come to terms with their desires and to adopt a correct attitude to the words "can", "ought" and "no".

Yet while developing the individual's ability to come to terms with his desires, a teacher should respect, not degrade the individual, as teachers do when punishing a pupil. Promoting *respect of the individual* to my way of thinking is the key to the moral core of the individual which we are called upon to create. (35)

The educational impact of the teacher's censure depends upon his moral qualities, his tactfulness and authority. However harsh his assessment of a pupil's behaviour, an experienced teacher would never go so far as to mete out some really devastating censure. Intelligent criticism always contains an element of aston-

ishment: "I never would have expected such behaviour of you, I thought you capable of far better things than your recent behaviour." These words are not usually used directly but the pupil is left to "read them between the lines"—achieving this is the real art of criticism. If a teacher indulges in invective instead of subtle and intelligent censure, thus undermining his pupil's sense of dignity, this arouses bitterness, despair, resentment and introversion, so that a pupil starts to look upon the teacher as a hostile figure. The art of censure lies in a wise combination of strictness and kindness: a pupil must sense in his teacher's censure not only justified severity but also kind concern. (14, 12)

Straps and fists are a disgrace and shame to the teaching profession, because in schools, those sacrosanct worlds where humanity, goodness and truth should reign supreme, there are frequent cases when children are afraid to darken their doors, because they know that the teachers will tell their fathers about their bad behaviour and poor progress in learning, and then their fathers will beat them. That is not an abstract sequence of events concocted for the occasion, but the sad truth: mothers often write letters to me on this very problem, and even children themselves. When a teacher notes in a pupil's work record—"Your son has no wish to learn anything, do something about it"—he is in fact packing a stick into the pupil's satchel which the father will make use of

when he gets home. If we imagine a complex operation is in progress and a skilled surgeon is bending over an open wound, when a butcher bursts into the operating theatre with an axe stuck into his belt which he then seizes hold of and shoves into the wound—well fists and straps are no better than that butcher's axe. . . .

A child hates those who strike him. He is well aware that his father's hand is being guided by the teacher and he starts to hate both his father and teacher, both school and books. (12, 17)

As a rule I forgive children who commit a misdemeanour by mistake. Forgiveness can reach the most sensitive areas of a pupil's self-esteem, it serves to dynamise a pupil's will directed towards ironing out the error he has committed. A child not only deeply repents of what he has done, but tries to redeem his guilt through active effort. . . . There are circumstances when forgiveness has a far more powerful moral impact than punishment would ever have done. (5, 42-43)

Punishment, particularly when there is uncertainty as to its justification (which you will find in the overwhelming majority of family conflicts), coarsens the child's mind and emotions and fills him with bitterness and resentment. (16)

Prohibition is a very necessary and effective educational device when skilfully used. Pro-

hibition if backed up by the indispensable moral authority of the teacher who prohibits, can forestall many disasters: it can stop young people squandering away their lives, yearning for more than their fair share of life's benefits which they have not earned by working for them themselves. . . . Indeed the desires of an immature individual can be compared with the shoots on a young fruit tree: a number of young shoots appear on it, and some of them are "wild", which gardeners prune back leaving only the fruit-bearing ones on the tree. The same thing happens with human desires during years of childhood and adolescence: there are no end to the schoolchild's desires. Yet if everything that shows green is given its head then the fruit tree will run riot and the abundant growth of "wild" shoots will choke the growth of the fruit-bearing branches. If the elder members of a family try to satisfy a child's every wish, a capricious being will emerge, the slave of his own whims and a despot in the family. Education of desires is subtle intricate work demanded of the teacher/gardener, who must be wise and determined, sensitive and merciless. He skilfully prunes back the "wild" shoots, leaving behind those that will bear fruit. (14, 12)

A sign of blind ignorance in teaching matters is the fact that certain teachers, when placing confidence in a child, remind him at the same time that although there have been many bad conduct marks in his record trust is

still being placed in him, implying that he the teacher is a kind person and the pupil for his part must be good as well. . . . Words of this type are salt in a child's wounds, for he feels that the teacher thought up the whole business about placing trust in him, merely so as to tighten his own control of the situation. More often than not he refuses to cooperate with the teacher's efforts. (14, 12)

While an adult can appreciate unfairness as a mistake, for a child an understanding of all the complexities of life is not yet within a child's reach. . . . A child senses injustice when he is shouted at rudely, or laughed at, even in what might seem to be no more than a chance remark, and---most serious and important of all---in condescension on the part of adults towards children. (13, 3)

An agitated child has not lost his faith in justice and his teacher. Moreover he expects to hear truthful words from his teacher and hopes that he will be treated fairly. An intelligent teacher after realising his mistake will find scores of means for "relieving the pressure". If a teacher is bereft of even the most elementary teaching ability, then on the contrary he will attempt to stifle the child's agitation, to "close all safety valves" thus reducing the child to a state of dull submissiveness. Sometimes this is actually achieved, and at what cost! (13, 3)

Persecution complexes—which are most dangerous disorders—are encountered much more seldom than children of the nervous, highly strung type. After once experiencing the shock of unfair criticism, a child begins to see injustice all around him. . . .

The longer a child suffers from this, the more his will weakens. As the expression goes, he ceases to be able to pull himself together. When preparing his lessons, he is thinking less about the content of the material to be studied and more about how the teacher will call upon him and be overstrict, etc. . . . In the mind of a child subject to a persecution complex there takes root and gradually develops a feeling of hatred not only towards the teacher, but in general to everything associated with school. He thinks up the most ingenious excuses so as to be able to stay at home. Deceitfulness is one of the characteristic features of this disease, when it becomes chronic. When lying such a child can look his teacher or mother straight in the eye, for lies appear to him as the truth. The child is himself convinced that his lie is the truth, especially in those cases when preparation for lessons and homework are being involved. (13, 3)

Feigned nonchalance is really no more than the other side of embitterment. A child pretends that he is indifferent to everything: the bad marks which he is given almost every day, and his parents' summons to the school. This assumed carefree behaviour is a form of outlet

for active protest. . . . After the return of an exercise book containing a test, for which—as he knows all too well—he has been given a poor mark, such a child will nonchalantly throw his exercise book back into his desk, without even looking at the mistakes. He strolls up to the board in a free-and-easy fashion, trying thereby to conceal his constant tension and pain resulting from hurt pride. It is children with a deep sense of pride who are most prone to lay on this feigned nonchalance. (13, 3)

Superficial unconcern is the lot of active, energetic, impulsive children. Unable to understand the inner world of the child, the teacher sees activity and energy as stubbornness, mischievousness and capriciousness. The teacher tries to suppress what seems to him superfluous activity in an unnecessarily coarse and tactless way that offends the child. He doesn't understand what the teacher wants because he doesn't feel his activity as something that can be isolated from his nature: activity is inherent in the child. (13, 3)

It should be noted, as a matter of fact, that cases of feigned nonchalance are observed only among boys. Often these are children who in Classes 1 and 2 or even 3 manifest real ability and achieve considerable success. Then something strange seems to come over them: their school record slopes off abruptly and their marks accordingly. The reason is clear: the

children achieved their success too easily, basically without effort, and teachers did not notice this in time. They grow accustomed to good marks, then when for the first time they are obliged to grapple with some serious work, and make an effort, they do not know what that involves, or how they should go about it. They become the victims of their own lack of discipline. Bad marks bowl them over, while their sense of hurt pride assumes disastrous proportions. Feigned nonchalance becomes in addition to various other things a means of disguising shame. Only concentrated activity and energy help him to avoid dejection and bewilderment. (13, 3)

I am dwelling in some detail on this condition for it is something which teenagers are particularly prone to: it develops slowly and gradually and is disguised by ordinary *joie de vivre*. Certain teachers tend to interpret this nonchalance as their pupils' sober approach to life: there is nothing terrible about it, they maintain, for it just means that the young person has realised that he will not be able to shine any more and for that reason has become indifferent. In order to recognise various mental conditions a rare degree of teaching skill, sensitivity and considerateness is required. (13, 3)

Indifference is the opposite of feigned nonchalance. It is a defect of young girls, although shy, weak-willed boys often suffer from it as



well. It appears far earlier than most "defects" and develops relatively faster: deep-rooted indifference can be encountered as early as Classes 2 and 3. It should be noted that more often than not it develops in the wake of some ordinary, externally imperceptible disease of the digestive, respiratory organs or the cardiovascular system. (13, 3)

I see indifference as the most dangerous mental state of all. In indifferent pupils it is particularly difficult to restore a child's inner resources, since they are often already being undermined by other diseases, as pointed out earlier.

Yet at the same time the emergence of this condition is highly pronounced and not difficult to notice. Most frequently of all it is diligent hard-working and assiduous pupils (in particular girls) who have to work hard for their success who become the indifferent ones. A child is working away diligently when at some stage his strength fails him, often simply his physical strength. A teacher, who only has eyes for the results of work, has no idea of the price paid for those results. The child has run out of steam, as the saying goes, and then come the low marks, or a serious warning from the teacher, or a summons to the school for the parents. The child is seriously worked up by this time, his nervous system is keyed up but only temporarily, soon the excitement dies down to be followed by depression. The child is exposed to a new danger, which he is unable

to escape and which the teacher fails to observe: namely terror of marks. (13, 3)

This terror is not only fear of unsatisfactory marks, but the result of a severe emotional trauma. The condition starts early, from the very beginning of school education. The earlier it starts, the harder it is to recognise, the more difficult it is to distinguish manifestations of fear from manifestations of retarded intellectual development. . . . Imagine a child who does not know what shouting is, let alone shouting combined with invective and who naturally is petrified when he encounters it. His fear paralyses him to such an extent that he does not hear even his own name: the teacher's words lose all meaning for him, he is unable to take in what the teacher is talking about. In this way whole "chunks" of a lesson (15 to 20 minutes) can be blotted out of a pupil's consciousness.

Or we find a teacher glued to the spot in astonishment to see that the rest of the class have long since started drawing circles while Vitya is still struggling with vertical lines. The teacher does not appreciate what is happening. Vitya meanwhile is gradually acquiring a reputation as an inattentive and unimaginative pupil. (13, 3)

An inhibited, fear-ridden child cannot think normally. There remain in his mind only shreds of a thought process. Fear impedes his speech and the child appears almost tongue-

tied to the teacher. Yet in another context the child might appear like any other. With his mother or father, his elder friends, in the woods, out in the fields helping bring in the harvest he would be not only eager to work but intelligent, resourceful, lively, gay and enterprising. . . .

In the vast majority of cases a child overcomes this fear in the end. Yet under the influence of fear his normal development is inhibited for a number of years. Some of his most precious years are lost. (13, 3)

Bitterness is the most extreme and profound reaction of an overexcited nervous system. Once more this is a reaction to unfair treatment. . . .

Bitterness directed against school in general and against the teacher in particular is found as a rule in young teenagers. Actions betraying a bitter or cruel streak are essentially criminal ones, the repercussions of which can be very serious. (13, 3)

What should be done to avoid such things occurring in schools? Most important of all is to be aware of what is going on. It is wrong to go on reconciling oneself to the fact that the child's emotional life is a closed book to certain teachers. The question of children's mental states should always be included on the agendas of teachers' meetings and seminars on theoretical problems and the practice of communist education.

Child psychology must be central to educational theory and that of the dynamic, not narrowly pragmatic variety. (13, 3)

It is impossible to treat a child humanely if one has no access to his emotions. Humanness cannot be achieved with the help of special methods. Condescension or "sweet words" is profoundly alien to genuine humaneness. . . .

A truly humane approach is distinguished first and foremost by fairness. Yet there is not and indeed cannot be any abstract fairness in schools. Fairness demands a sensitive awareness to the inner world of each individual pupil on the part of the teacher. A teacher can only be fair if he has enough mental energy to devote attention to each individual pupil. Accent on routine, stereotypes, lack of individual approach are the worst manifestation of indifference and unfairness. (13, 3)

We must not close our eyes to the fact that in some schools children do not grasp or sense their teacher as an individual, thus making it impossible for themselves to show understanding for the difficulties he encounters in his work. With their mischief and pranks children often aggravate tired teachers who have reached the end of their tether at the close of the day, and start losing control and shouting. . . . Shouting is one of the unmistakable signs of a poor knowledge of human relationships. When teachers start shouting this stuns and deafens his pupils. . . .

You may well have had occasion to notice that when teachers start shouting at children their voice is quite different from the one they use in a peaceful setting. The teachers themselves would not recognise their own voices. . . . A shouting teacher stifles and muffles the voice of a child's conscience. . . . (13, 3)

In answer to the question as to whether a teacher should ever raise his voice or shout, I would reply that the emotions of an emotionally sensitive person reach children's hearts without anyone having to resort to shouting. A teacher who is acutely sensitive to a child's inner world will never resort to shouting. Children can pick out anxiety, disappointment, perplexity, surprise and indignation along with dozens of other emotional nuances in the ordinary voice of their teacher. The teacher endowed with true human sensitivity does not need to indulge in rhetorical exercises to ensure that such emotions are conveyed to his pupils. Genuine emotions children will always be able to "read between the lines". (13, 3)

Nothing serves to harden and embitter a young heart more than *insult*. Insult brings to the surface coarse, sometimes even brutal instincts from the depths of man's subconscious. There will not be an end to juvenile delinquency until this intolerable feature of bad teaching disappears. Sometimes it seems incredible to the adult mind that a young person

should have committed a cruel or inhuman act; should have struck a blow at another of his kind and humiliated him. Let us take a more careful look at such a youth and then we shall without doubt encounter emotional immaturity, born of a combination of environmental factors such as violence, insults, mistrust, indifference, heartlessness met with from the elder generation. (14, 2)

The truly skilful teacher assesses the actions and behaviour of his pupils not in specially chosen pithy phrases but first and foremost through the emotional nuances of ordinary words. Let us take the phrase: "That was a naughty thing you did. . . ."

These words used by one teacher can arouse disappointment, stinging shame, even confusion, while another using the same words cannot produce any emotional reaction and will be met with nothing but indifference. The first teacher would be possessed of profound emotional sensitivity, something that cannot be deliberately learnt but which is inextricably bound up with an individual's moral resources and principles, his warmheartedness. The words of the second teacher carry no message and he often tries to compensate for this deficiency by shouting. How many "educators" there are in our schools who only command one note in the emotional scale—indignation! They deserve our profound sympathy, for the educational influence they can exert in the classroom is precisely nil. (14, 12)

There are cases (although extremely rare ones in good schools) when certain pupils commit grave breaches of discipline, confident they will get away with it while well aware of the implications of their behaviour which is preventing both teacher and pupils from working normally. If pupils of this type from other schools arrive at mine, I set things right by means of critical mistrust combined with another effective method of correction namely especially strict supervision. Such methods can be used, I would stress again, only for such pupils as have acquired a distorted view of right and wrong, an inflated sense of their own importance and have lost the ability to appreciate the emotional reactions of those around them—all this as a result of situations that have built up at home and numerous mistakes committed at previous schools.

... Mistrust as a method of correction loses all meaning and degenerates into the opposite if it does not meet with the approval and support of the collective. Before resorting to mistrust the teacher should carefully prepare the ground for this step through discussion of the moral implications involved with all members of the class collective, and above all through emphasis of the collective's refusal to tolerate or reconcile themselves to idleness, parasitism, indiscipline and slackness of the wrongdoer. (14, 12)

## **We Try to Make Even the Walls of the School Speak to the Children**

Our school is situated on the edge of a large village fifteen kilometres or so from the town of Kremenchug. The school grounds occupy about five hectares and they are bordered by woods, high-yielding fields of the nearby collective farm and the river Omelnik, a small tributary of the Dnieper which skirts their south side. At this point the river has been dammed to create a large lake. (11, 107)

The village is almost hidden by a sea of greenery. Between the school grounds and the collective-farm fields we planted several oak-groves and copses as windbreaks. Next to the school there is a sports stadium with a ring of apple trees around it. There used to be a dark ravine on the north-west side of the school. We planted oaks round the top of it and lilac bushes on the slopes, so we now have an oak-grove and a garden of beautiful lilac. (11, 107)

The countryside where the school is sited undulates gently. Enchanting views of the approaches to the Dnieper can be enjoyed from any of the nearby hills. From the top of a barrow the fields of Poltava country beyond the Dnieper are visible on a clear day, and also the blue mirror of Kremenchug man-made sea: on the horizon you can make out the silhouette of a hydroelectric power station and in the distant haze the outline of a motor-works and



railway-wagon factory. To the west and to the south are spread wide fields scattered with ancient Scythian barrows. (11, 107)

It would seem likely that the school of the future is bound to make the fullest possible use of all that Nature provides and all that man can do to ensure that Nature serves him in order to promote man's harmonious development. For this reason alone we should protect and supplement existing natural riches. The work of our pupils to multiply the natural resources here over a comparatively short period—twenty years—has substantially changed, indeed transformed their surroundings here. Over these two decades we have transformed forty hectares of poor clayey soil into fertile, rich fields and abundant orchards. (11, 109)

Four of the buildings at our school are set aside for study purposes. The main building with ten classrooms in it is for Classes 5-10 (Classes 5-7 on the ground floor, Classes 8-10 on the first). The other three buildings near-by house Classes 1, 2, 3 and 4. Each building contains a staff-room. (11, 109)

In each building there lives a small family so to speak, in which all the children know each other and gradually come to join in the life of the collective made up of the whole school as well. The atmosphere is free of fuss or bustle which always tire children very quickly. They can all run straight out of their "house" into the garden, onto the

green lawns; in any weather they can make their way to any of the other buildings to visit their younger or older friends along the little concrete paths that save them from wetting their feet. (11, 109)

In the main study block, apart from classrooms, there are a maths room, language and literature section, a foreign languages laboratory complete with a set of tapes and records, radio workshop (with a school radio station), a music room, Pioneer and Komsomol meeting rooms, a school museum, methodology room, a "parents' corner", a photographic workshop, art room, sports hall, a recreation room (where pupils can find peace and quiet to daydream in, talk to their friends, read books and newspapers), an equipment centre where pupils can help themselves to what they need. (11, 112)

In the language and literature section there are two hundred works of literature, which should be read by every schoolchild in order for him to have a grounding in literature. This selection is considerably less than most people read before they reach maturity, however ensuring that all pupils read these particular books (and indeed read several of them more than once) is no easy task for the teacher. There are also lists of recommended reading for pupils of every age; there is even a separate list of books that should be re-read; at our school we regard this grounding as an essential part of real moral and aesthetic education. Also available are annotations on out-

standing works of fiction drawn up by pupils, advice for young readers, exercise books containing essays of particular merit drawn from the whole period since the school was first set up, individual issues of wall newspapers and folders of old copies of the manuscript journal put out at the school entitled *All Our Own Work*. (11, 112)

The list of works recommended for re-reading is prefaced with the following words: "Boys and girls. Here is a list of titles which form part of man's literary treasure-house. They should be read several times over. These books teach us how to live and open up before us the beauty of art." (11, 112)

In the staff-room there is nothing reminiscent of an ordinary school setting apart from time-tables: there is an aquarium on the table, next to that some indoor plants including a lemon and a laurel tree to keep the air pleasantly fresh, the table is ringed with soft chairs and on it lie journals and a chess set. (11, 116)

We also have a separate reading-room for girls, in which are laid out books and brochures (the supply is constantly being replenished) on anatomy and physiology, on feminine hygiene and motherhood. These books and brochures are read by the girls with great interest. . . . (11, 116)

In every educational establishment there is a supply of cleaning equipment from which

students can help themselves. Each class has its own bucket, watering-can, dust-brushes, dusters. There is a vacuum cleaner on every floor. Each of these objects has its set place.

Before coming into school each pupil wipes his feet twice: the first time is by the fence in a special little reservoir for washing down boots to get the worst off and then later at the end of the concrete path, he has to wash his footwear down again before actually entering the school building. The staff on duty check the state of all pupils' shoes: each one stands on a piece of white canvas and wipes his soles on it, if no mark is left on the canvas he can go into the school. If the canvas on the other hand shows dirty, the pupil is sent back again to wash down his footwear taking with him the dirtied canvas to wash as well. But no more than two minutes is set aside for that each day (for shoe-washing and cleanliness checks). Yet at the same time those two minutes do a great deal to shorten and alleviate both the work pupils have to do to clean up after themselves and that of the cleaning women. (11, 117)

The footpaths along which the children cross from one building to the next are kept in a state of ideal cleanliness, and if they get wet in bad weather, pupils bring moisture inside but no dirt or dust. (11, 117)

The school's electric power station consists of two sections. In the first there is an alternating-current generator with a capacity of

sixteen kilowatts, another with a capacity of four and a half kilowatts and a direct-current generator with a capacity of two kilowatts, a thermo-electric generator, battery-charger, a galvanic trough, and electro-smelting furnace, electric-welding apparatus, a milling machine, a grinding lathe and a circular saw; they are all kept here so that when the electric generators are switched on for demonstration purposes the power should not go to waste.

In the second section there is the children's electric power station. It has a low-voltage power plant of small capacity. Mechanical models can be connected up to the generator. Senior pupils have constructed a number of installations in there which automatically switch off the current and which stop the small internal combustion engine—to make sure that accidents are avoided.

Next to the electric power station are the foundry and the smithy. (11, 121)

Almost everything to be found in the laboratories, special study-rooms and workshops is the work of pupils and teachers. Each year the study-rooms and laboratories are issued with additional new machinery, working models and installations, tables for model construction, etc. In 1963/64 for example pupils and teachers made a milling machine for metalwork, a wood-turning lathe, a circular saw, two automatically programmed lathes, six small metal lathes for pupils from junior and middle classes, 15 working models of alter-

nating-current generators and 45 wireless sets. We produce machines for working metal to be used not only in our own premises but also at neighbouring schools. Over the last ten years we have supplied to other eight-year secondary schools 18 machines and 45 visual aids for use in physics, mathematics and chemistry lessons. (11, 121)

The south, west and north sides of the school grounds are taken up with an orchard that covers two hectares, where you will find all the varieties of fruit trees which are grown in the Ukraine (apples, pears, plums, apricots, peaches, cherries, walnuts). It was first planted out by the school's pupils twenty years ago and is extended each year. Next to the main school block there is a 'vineyard (0.2 hectare) —an especial favourite with both children and teachers. From May to November the children take delight first in the sea of thick foliage and then the ripening grapes. (11, 123)

Between the orchard and the vineyard there is our Greenhouse No. 1 and the "green laboratory". Flowers and vegetables are grown in the greenhouse and experiments are carried out. One set of shelves for plants is placed in the centre of the greenhouse and round it there are folding benches which the children sit on when they come out here for study sessions. Pupils built the greenhouse and it was they who installed the water pipes and central heating. Even on the coldest winter days the

temperature in the greenhouse is kept up to at least 27°C. (11, 123)

Behind the school's working garden stands the mechanics laboratory and a garage for two school cars and two tractors. There are also a number of agricultural machines and implements (sowing machines, ploughs, a cultivator, sprayer for the fruit trees, etc.). The mechanics workshop and the garages (apart from the main one there is also a second smaller one for two mini-cars designed by members of the mechanics hobby circle) were built by senior pupils. Part of the small garage is used by the "Young Motorists" club, and here tools for mending motors are kept and materials used for model construction. The work that goes on here is always most enthusiastic: small machines and devices are made or assembled which involve the use of electric power for work that would otherwise have been done by hand. (11, 126)

The school garden is a sea of greenery. The school has no need of a large yard, from which the wind would have blown dust into the classroom windows. Out in the garden there are countless islands of green lawns and secluded grassy corners. There is so much greenery that although pupils sometimes walk about over the grass and sit on it, they would never be able to wear it away.

There are also many flowers, arbours and groves. The path leading from the main school

building to the laboratories and study-rooms is bordered with rose bushes. This rose arbour is a favourite place for walks. In the orchard, peach grove and oak copse there are at least thirty secluded corners full of fragrant flowers which make an ideal setting for meditation or a quiet talk. All that is part of man's life should be beautiful and this is why we have devoted so much attention to the external setting of our school. (11, 126)

As a child's emotional and cultural world is taking shape, what he sees around him is very important, on the walls of the school corridor, in the classroom and the workshop. Nothing should be a source of inspiration and enlightenment. We try to ensure that every drawing and every word a child sees provide him with a source of new ideas about himself and his friends. (11, 130)

The decoration of the ground-floor corridor intended for pupils aged between twelve and fourteen is the face of the school so to speak; it reflects the educational aims of the teaching body and the latter's style of work, and the ideas and work skills of teachers and pupils. (11, 134)

In the corridor of the building, where pupils from Class 1 and 2 study, drawings have been put up to attract the children's attention but they do not require captions, for they are catering



for children who have only just joined the school.

These drawings are changed at regular intervals: at the beginning of the school year the children are shown drawings of the interesting things children can do at school, even the very youngest ones. These pictures represent something in the way of a "world in pictures" that acquaints the child with his immediate environment. Young children enjoy looking at pictures depicting other children like themselves—children at play, caring for the school pets, in the botanical laboratory, in the greenhouse, in the workshops manning a drill or lathe, working with a vice or fret-saws. In addition there are drawings depicting children at leisure, pioneers at work and at play, pupils from the youngest classes. These pictures also show young children how children of their own age or slightly older can drive a mini-car. That is still more interesting. Then the world illustrated in these pictures starts to unfold before children as the real world. (11, 130)

For the small children we hang up pictures to help them understand the world around them. For example there is a series of pictures with the overall title: "Why Does It Happen Like That?" The pictures show ordinary things familiar to the children, taken from Nature or a work setting: however there is something unusual about them, something that the children can't help thinking about, which fills them with astonishment. A willow branch stuck into the damp earth brings forth shoots, turns into

a tree, while an oak-branch withers. Why? On a spring night, when waves of cold air are sweeping down from the North, threatening to blister the flowering trees, bonfires are lit in the orchards and the damage is prevented. Why?, etc.

The second series of pictures has the title: "What Are They Doing That For?" Men are shown boring holes through thick ice on a pond in the winter. What for? During the summer heat a fine layer of dung is being scattered on parched soil round vegetable plants. What for? On summer days jugs of milk are wrapped in damp cloths. What for? Pieces of iron are made red-hot before being fashioned into axes or hammers. And so on and so forth.

The third series of pictures comes under the heading: "What Is Wrong Here?" Deliberate mistakes are made in them: red tomatoes are shown ripening in dark shade of an oak tree; collective farmers are shown bringing in water melons past flowering apple trees; the shadows of poplar trees fall in the direction from which the sun is shining; beehives have been taken outside and set up in a field sown with wheat, etc., etc. These pictures make the youngsters think about phenomena of the natural world and work.

The fourth series: "Where Is This Taking Place?" shows scenes familiar to the children from books that their elders have read to them, from their elders' own stories or from films; for example an aeroplane is shown landing on a small runway surrounded by ice-hummocks; a

rocket is forging into space surrounded by stars and at the window there is the smiling face of the first Soviet cosmonaut familiar to the children. And so on and so forth. (11, 131)

On the wall-board with the heading "Why Is It Done?" there are pictures with the following captions: "Why are all the metal parts of cars and machines rubbed over with lubricants for the winter?", "Why are seed potatoes warmed out in the sun before being sown?", "Why are fields harrowed in two days after the rain?", "Why is coal dampened before being burnt?". And so on and so forth.

A further series of drawings come under the heading: "How to Find Out?..."—How old a fruit tree is, without sawing off even a single branch? Will an apple tree flower in the spring, and if so how to find it out in the winter? What aeroplane is flying up there and does it have propellers or a jet engine? (11, 133)

In the middle of the central entrance hall there is the Komsomol's Lenin display. Special posters and collections of photographs are devoted to such subjects as "Lenin's Teaching on Communist Morality", "Exploits of Komsomol Heroes", "The Finest People from Our Village". Then there is a list of books "What to Read about Lenin".

One of the central focuses of the exhibit is a board headed "Of Burning Interest to Mankind", featuring articles and photographs about important events in our country and abroad. (11, 143)

At the entrance to the first floor where the senior classes are there is a poster saying: "Boys and Girls! You are on the threshold of adult life. You must learn to take your own education in hand in order to become fine up-standing adults. Pay heed to these words of famous men on the subject of self-education". Statements by celebrated men and women of the past and present follow. (11, 140)

We try to make even the walls of the school speak to the pupils.

The profound ideas reproduced on the posters and wall-boards contribute to the pupils' intellectual experience and arouse response in the first place because they are part of the over-all system of moral, intellectual and aesthetic education provided for our pupils. If the message of the statements cited above did not link up with the present-day interests and concerns of our school collective, then these words would strike no chord in their minds or hearts, and would fall on deaf ears. All these wall-boards and posters are changed from time to time depending upon the immediate focus of the educational work being carried out in the school. (11, 138)

### **Half Our Work Is Devoted to Health Care**

I have no hesitation in repeating time and time again that health care is the most important task of the teacher. Children's buoyant zest

for life or their lack of it determines the quality of their emotional life, world outlook, intellectual development, the consolidation of their knowledge and their faith in their own potential. If I were to measure up the work and anxieties I encounter with children during their first four years at school it would emerge that a good half are devoted to the *children's health*. (10, 87)

Concern for health is impossible without constant communication with the family. The overwhelming majority of discussions with parents, particularly during the first couple of years of the child's school career, are about his health. (10, 87)

Many of the children were not receiving important food substance in their diet essential for the strength of their growing bodies and to ward off colds or disorders in their metabolism. Only eight of my pupils had honey at home and honey, speaking figuratively, is a slice of sun on your plate. I used to talk to the parents persuading them how important eating honey was for their children's health. By the end of the first month of the term thirteen families had started bee-keeping on a small scale and by the spring the number had grown to twenty-three.

In the autumn I advised mothers to make jam from rose-hips, sloes and other fruits and berries rich in vitamins to put by for the winter. I also spoke to parents about planting the

necessary number of fruit trees in their gardens, particularly apple trees. Children should be having fresh fruit all through the winter and this is easy to ensure in the countryside as long as people are prepared to make a little extra effort. (10, 41)

Surveys and special research programmes have been undertaken . . . over a number of years which have revealed these disturbing facts: 25 per cent of young children do not breakfast before going to school, because they have no appetite; 30 per cent eat less than half what is necessary for a normal diet; 23 per cent eat only half a proper breakfast and only 22 per cent breakfast as they should by normal standards. Children who leave for school without breakfast are subject to dizziness after several hours at their desks because their stomachs are empty. By the time such pupils come home from school they have not eaten for several hours, but they have no real healthy appetite (parents often complain that their children are not interested in simple healthy food such as soup, milk-puddings or milk to drink but only want to nibble at tasty tit-bits. (10, 89)

. . . We taught our youngsters not to be afraid of draughts; experience has shown that no draught need be feared, if a person has been exposed to them since childhood. It is just as important to make children intolerant of stuffy air in an unventilated room, as it is to instil into them cleanliness. (10, 91)

The elixir of good health is air saturated with the phytoncides from cereals—wheat, rye, barley, buckwheat and other meadow grasses. I often used to take my pupils out into the fields and the meadows for them to breathe in the good air filled with the scent of cereals. I used to urge parents to plant hazel-nut trees under the windows of their children's bedroom; these trees fill the air with phytoncides, which wipe out many disease-carrying germs. The scent of hazel trees is killing to various insect pests. Wherever hazel trees grow you will find no flies or mosquitoes. I also made sure that every family put up a summer shower in its garden. (10, 42)

I used to worry about the fact that many pupils had poor sight, and how some pupils had to start wearing glasses as early as Class 3. My observations in relation to many young children led me to conclude that it was not so much a question of their being tired out by reading, as their incorrect daily routine, particularly the fact that their food was lacking in vitamins and that being physically weak these children caught cold easily. Some children's diseases have a bad effect on the sight. A proper daily routine and diet, and plenty of exercise all serve to protect a child from disease and help him to enjoy the beauties of the world around him. (10, 42)

The years I spent observing children brought me up against distressing phenomena: in the

spring from about March onwards all children are weaker than at other times in the year. Children seem to come to the end of their tether: their body seems less able to resist colds and their capacity for work falls off. Their sight is also impaired during these spring months.

I found explanations for these phenomena in the works of doctors and psychologists: the rhythm of the interaction of the body's various systems changes abruptly in the spring months. The reason for this is that the body's supply of vitamins is coming to an end and the abrupt fall in the activity of solar radiation also makes itself felt so that prolonged concentrated mental activity tires the nervous system. (10, 42)

Experience has shown us that in 85 per cent of cases where children are doing badly at school, the main reason for backwardness is poor health, some indisposition or illness, more often than not of a quite imperceptible variety but something that can only be put to right, provided there is concerted effort on the part of mother, father, doctor and teacher. Indispositions and disorders of the cardio-vascular system, the respiratory organs or the stomach or intestines are very often not actual diseases but deviations from the healthy norm, concealed from us by a child's vitality and sprightliness. Many years of work among children have shown me that so-called retarded thought processes are in many cases the result of general indisposition, of which even the child himself is unaware and do not stem from any



physiological changes or disfunctions of the brain cells. In some children a sickly pallor or poor appetite makes it clear that something is wrong. The slightest attempt to improve a child's diet evokes violent reaction which results in red spots. The most detailed tests are of little help, for on the surface everything is in order. In most cases it emerges that we are up against the disruption of a child's metabolism resulting from excessively long periods spent indoors. In such cases children's capacity for concentrated mental work is impaired. The number of such indispositions increases in particular during periods of marked growth and at puberty.

The only radical cure for such conditions is to change patterns of work and recreation: long periods out of doors, open windows in bedrooms, early bedtime and early rising and nourishing food. (10, 39)

Some children appear healthy and yet on closer scrutiny of their work it emerges that they are suffering from some latent indisposition. An interesting detail to note is that latent indispositions and ailments become particularly noticeable when teachers try to fill every minute of a lesson with concentrated mental work. Some children are quite unable to keep up with teachers who are all out to see that "not a moment of the lesson is wasted". I have come to realise that an accelerated "tempo" of this kind is too much, indeed, harmful even for children in perfect health. Excessive mental effort only means that children's eyes will start

to blur over and their movements grow languid. By then children will no longer be capable of anything, all they will be wanting is fresh air, while the teacher keeps them "in harness" and goads them on at an ever faster pace. . . . (10, 40)

We do not sanction experimentation with "effective" or "accelerated" teaching methods, based on the view that a child's head is like an electronic device which can assimilate without end. A child is a living creature, whose brain is an infinitely intricate, delicate organ, of which we should take the utmost thoughtful care. The primary education course can be assimilated in three years, but only on condition that constant care is taken of children's health and every step taken to ensure their normal physical development. It is not speed and concentration that are the key to successful mental work, but correct, carefully thought-out organisation of that work and the provision of a many-sided physical, intellectual and aesthetic education. (11, 147)

A child's health depends on the kind of homework he is given and how and when he does it. Very important is the emotional side of the process of independent study in the home. If a child takes up his books unwillingly, this not only acts as a damper on his intellectual energy, but it has a negative effect on the complex system of the interaction of his internal organs. I know many cases when a child

who has developed an aversion to schoolwork started to have severe problems with his digestion and to suffer from gastric disease. (10, 90)

...If a child sits at his homework for several hours before bedtime, he will start to lag behind. Passivity while a child is nominally engaged in mental work at his lessons is more often than not the result of the fact that a child spends the hours he should be out of doors—in the garden or playing snow balls—poring over books. (11, 150)

The recuperative role of sleep depends not merely on its duration, but also on the part of the night during which the person sleeps, and how and when he works during the day. Those who feel best of all are those who go to bed early, have sufficient sleep, wake up early and spend their first 5-10 waking hours engaged in intensive mental work (the actual hours depend upon the age of the person concerned). In the hours that follow work, intensity slacks off. Intense mental activity, particularly learning by heart, is out of the question during the last 5-7 hours before bedtime (for those in weak health or recovering from sickness such activity is out of the question for the last 8-9 hours before bedtime). (11, 150)

Experience shows that if teaching and educational work are organised correctly (especially the study of new material at lessons) two times more mental work can be achieved in the

course of 1.5 or 2 hours (sometimes 2.5) in the morning, as in the same period after school. In the morning pupils from Classes 1 and 2 complete all their homework in 20-25 minutes, pupils from classes 3, 4 and 5 in 40-45 minutes. Homework, as school practice has shown, cannot be avoided. Work requiring considerable time (essays, the execution of complex drawings) should be spread over several days (exactly how this should be done is a question on which teachers should advise pupils). Mental work for a child in the morning starts with repetition of what needs to be learned, remembered and kept in his mind. (11, 154)

Schoolchildren who stay on at school for lunch and afternoon homework sessions are not with their books all the time; their homework is completed early in the morning at home. Groups organised for such children facilitate domestic arrangements for the family at home, but do not substitute the family (indeed nothing can). Education lacking constant, daily communication between children and their parents is abnormal and distorted education, just as parents' lives are abnormal and distorted if they are not constantly called upon to care for their children. (11, 155)

The school opted for gymnastics and athletics as the main types of physical activities. . . . The aim of such exercise is to develop children's sense of the beauty of movement, strength, harmony, agility and staying-power. When pupils

are working on new exercises at gym, much attention is given to aesthetic perfection, to beauty. The desire to achieve perfection in department is an important incentive that makes pupils start the morning with physical exercises. (11, 159)

When performing such forms of exercise as running, skiing, swimming we attribute considerable importance to aesthetic perfection. For these and other types of sport it has become the rule to base adjudication on beauty, grace and harmony of movement, while speed has become a secondary factor. Beauty is not merely being demonstrated but created, and the same applies to physical perfection; in other words efforts are being made to achieve the main objectives of physical education. To sum up, we would never permit competitions in which the only criterion of success were the speed of movement. They encourage unhealthy excitement and ambition. Such competitions often lack beauty, aesthetic objectives and, most regrettable of all, mass appeal and consideration of individual opportunities. Sport must not be transformed from a means of physical education for all children into a means of achieving individual success; children must not be divided up into those who are good or bad at sport and unhealthy emotions should not be stimulated by an atmosphere of hysterical excitement at the prospect of the school's sports prestige.

Sport becomes a means of education when it is everyone's favourite. (11, 160)

...Harmony between a healthy body and healthy mind is impossible without joy. If a child who is enthralled by the beauty of the fields, the sparkling stars, the endless song of the crickets and the scent of wild flowers starts making up a song, this means that he has attained the peak of that harmony between body and mind. Care for a person's health, particularly a child's health, is not simply a series of sanitary norms and rules, or a list of do's and don'ts for the daily time-table, work, rest and food. It involves first and foremost care of the harmonious fullness of all man's physical and mental capacities, and the high point of that harmony is the joy of creativity. (10, 92)

### **Teaching Must Become a Science for Everyone**

I am firmly convinced that *teaching must become a science for everyone*—teachers and parents alike. We attempt to give parents a minimum grounding in educational science. To this end we arrange special courses for parents, for which they can enrol two years before their child starts school and continue to attend until their child completes his secondary school. The psychology and education course arranged for parents occupies a total of 250 hours. . . .

The course covers all fields incorporated into the university education course, but particular attention is paid to children's psychological

make-up at different ages, psychology of personality and the theory of physical, intellectual, moral and aesthetic education. We attempt to provide all fathers and mothers who attend the course with a basis of theoretical knowledge for applying it to their child's intellectual and emotional development. This requires of us teachers considerable tact and sensitivity. (11, 35)

We have achieved an attendance rate of 95-98 per cent of all parents. Twenty-five per cent of the families are represented by both parents. The course is arranged in such a way that after two to three years of the pre-school section, parents then attend the section dealing with the junior section of the school for four years, then the middle section for three years and a final three years in the senior section (Classes 8 to 10). Successful educational work at school would be quite unthinkable without this system of instruction designed to enlighten and instruct parents in the highly responsible skills of education. (14, 6)

One of the lectures in all sections of the parents' courses I set aside specially for the topic: how children imitate their elders. Parents show great interest in accounts of how children adopt some seemingly insignificant, isolated features of their parents' behaviour, which in their new form may well become exaggerated and be taken over by the child. Detailed analysis of how children single out certain

traits of their parents' characters, how they are passed on, and how the features of a young child's moral outlook take root, constitutes part of teachers' everyday work with parents both as a group and individuals. It is very important in order to ensure coincidence of the educational line followed at school and at home, that parents should learn to see themselves in their children and appreciate the dialectics inherent in their child's development. (14, 6)

A home with no books, no library, at least fails to exert any influence on the course of a child's school education, and at worst serves to stultify a child's existence, holding back his intellectual development; this in its turn means that teachers have to make a special effort to compensate for the limited nature of the family's interests in some way. (14, 6)

We consider it important to build up a diverse home library not only for the sake of the children, but also for the parents, whose intellectual interests are just as important as the children's reading. (14, 6)

In the course of twenty years I have made out 1,200 cards recording the development of my pupils from the onset of their teens till they left school. Perusal of this material demonstrates that adults of high moral calibre and conscientious attitudes to work come from homes where books are held in esteem. (14, 6)



In an anthology I compiled for parents entitled *A Humane World* considerable space is devoted to fairy-tales and children's books. I explain to parents which fairy-tales they ought to read to their children of pre-school age, and which children's books they should have on the shelf at home, how they should be read and expounded. On the whole books occupy an exceedingly important place in the intellectual interests of a family. (14, 6).

Perhaps some of you will wonder: if there are seven parents' study groups at the school and they meet twice a month, surely the teachers will be spending most of their time talking to parents? No, we do not regard this additional work-load as excessive, because at the same time we have ruled out many unnecessary but nevertheless widely practised types of meetings between teachers and parents. We do not visit children in their homes. Their fathers and mothers come to us themselves. (16)

From time to time we have special lectures for mothers in the parents' courses. . . . This is essential when it comes to discussion of various matters connected with children's sexual education. (14, 6)

On winter evenings fathers often come to visit the school. On such occasions teachers discuss in detail with them the important role of the man in the family. Great importance is attributed to such discussions, because fathers

have a very specific part to play in educating the younger generation.

Children are always eager for their fathers to be strong characters with a clear identity of their own and a responsible streak. If only every father realised and understood the tremendous need for him his child experiences, and how much he longs for there to be a wise, upstanding man beside him! (18)

At discussions with fathers only teachers talk to them about the ways in which they should pass on wisdom gleaned from their experience of life, and show resolution and perseverance in bringing up their children. (14, 6)

The time is at last ripe—and I am firmly convinced of this—to create ideal families, ideal relations between father and mother, between children and their parents. I am quite sure that the family is the magic foam on the sea from which beauty is born, and if there are no mysterious powers engendering that human beauty, then the function of schools will be to reproduce it. (31)

Without the support of the family we—I mean our school—would be powerless. Decades have been spent on giving parents an essential grounding in the art and skills of education. The parents of the current intake are our former pupils; we prepared them for their mission as parents when they were still sitting at their desks—and this is very important!

Boundless respect for our school and trust in it are the most important features of the present generation of parents. In local homes there is no higher authority on questions of ethics, child-care or upbringing than the school. We have achieved in making books and reading a must in every family. Half our work outside the classroom with the senior pupils is aimed at preparing them to be good fathers and mothers. Perhaps this may seem strange to some of you, perhaps we are mistaken; be that as it may—our predominant pre-occupation in work for “career orientation” is the training of future parent-educators when they are still on the school-bench. . . . (31)

I have faith in the great power of communist education. I believe that children and young people can be educated in such a way that punishment should prove unnecessary. I believe that utmost happiness and joy are to be found in full and interesting lives, in lives rich in ideas, aspirations, endeavours, in our discovery of the beauty and splendour inherent in our world, in the desire to be better tomorrow than we are today, in the reproduction of our own beautiful attributes in children and in lasting and unswerving effort to promote the welfare of our fellow-men and our Homeland. (29)

## II

### STUDY

#### **Knowledge Is Vital to Man, Precisely Because He Is Human**

Every teacher has to be skilled in training the minds of his pupils: if that law is not observed then a school ceases to be a school. Many of the disasters and problems of school life can be traced back to the teacher's poor skills reflected in the fact that when imparting knowledge he transmits it from his own head to that of his pupil without having any idea of what is going on in the latter. (14, 8)

Teachers who are able to *educate and mould* their pupil's character *through the medium of knowledge* present their pupils with an instrument in the form of this knowledge, which equips them for their first conscious steps towards discovery of the world around them. (14, 8)

Regardless of how well versed a teacher might be in the art of didactics, the quality of his lessons depends first and foremost on how far the educational principles and methods

are applied in the actual process of teaching and instruction. The explanation for all difficulties and setbacks in lessons in the overwhelming majority of cases is the teacher's forgetting that lessons are a joint effort of pupils and teacher, and that the success of that effort is determined first and foremost by the relationships which take shape between teacher and his pupils. (2, 70)

It is extremely important that knowledge acquired in the socialist school of today is regarded by young people not as a ticket to university but as riches essential to him, quite independently of what he does in later life, of whether he becomes an engineer, shepherd, physicist or farmer. (14, 2)

The content of education should not be approached only from the angle of its practical application in work, for knowledge is vital to man, precisely because he is human. (14, 8)

Overloading is a relative concept. Material is beyond a pupil's capacity when he is unable to grasp it in view of his age. The volume of the material to be assimilated which is within the grasp of the age group in question can vary widely depending upon the intellectual life of the collective and the individual concerned. Even the most insignificant, modest volume can be beyond a pupil's capacity, if the intellectual background to the lessons in question is limited or narrow. (11, 256)

Overloading is found in cases when mental work is of a one-sided type, when all pupils do is grind. The elimination of overloading is achieved not by mechanical curtailment of the range of knowledge incorporated into the syllabus, but by means of interest, the pupil's specific intellectual experience, the wealth of the intellectual background to the studies in progress. Before hearing explanations of the structure of the atom at a physics lesson, such a pupil has read a good deal of fascinating and interesting articles and reports about elementary particles; even if much that he read in such articles is beyond him, that will not dampen, but on the contrary stimulate his interest in the subject to be studied at lesson-time. (11, 256)

Idleness at lessons and an absence of mental exertion where required is the main cause for young people's lack of free time. (11, 161)

In junior classes even when a pupil forgets to complete his homework, he is not really at fault, for at that stage constant daily supervision by his elders is essential. (3, 141)

At the present time Soviet schools are introducing radical changes to our ideas about man's powers and opportunities in his childhood years. Pupils in the junior classes (7-11) have at their fingertips a far wider range of knowledge and skills than was the case in the past; instruction can begin not at seven but at six years of age, while primary education can

be fitted into three as opposed to four years. The reason behind these new possibilities is the dovetailing of children's intellectual and work experience (a pupil of 9-10 can be taught to work at a lathe and this skill will go a long way towards extending the scope of his intellectual work). The more complex the practical skills and work habits a child masters in his early years, the higher the level of intellectual development he will achieve by the end of his secondary-school career. (11, 11)

Every teacher when imparting knowledge laid down in the official syllabus is at the same time following *a second syllabus*, a programme of knowledge only supplementary to the compulsory one. . . .

Our teachers are firmly convinced that the intellectual development of senior pupils depends upon the combination of these two syllabuses. (12, 148)

Mastering the second syllabus is the basis for children in their early teens to gain intellectual maturity, take part in the many-faceted intellectual life of the collective, and engage in the constant exchange of cultural experiences.

The most important means to mastering the second syllabus is independent reading. (12, 149)

All debates and discussions on the subject as to how instruction should be lent a character-formative role are meaningless, so long as

self-education does not take sufficiently firm root in the life of young people. Without self-education, without harnessing mental potential and will-power for discovery of the world and self-discovery instruction can play no role in character formation. Life of modern man is unthinkable without constant communion with books, inspired by man's proud aspiration to ennoble himself. (12, 159)

If we take as an initial unit the level of knowledge attained by our pupils the year they leave school, in the course of their working life each one of them will need to add to that unit five or six additional ones, otherwise they will lag behind and be a failure at their work. Our life today demands constant updating of knowledge. Without a thirst for knowledge a full intellectual life is impossible, and it follows a full working, or creative life as well. This means that it is essential to foster man's intrinsic need for self-education. (12, 117)

**All Our Plans Are Reduced to Naught,  
if Our Pupils  
Have No Desire to Learn**

Children's mental effort differs from that of the adult. For a child the ultimate goal of the attainment of knowledge cannot be the main stimulus for his mental effort, as is the case



with the adult. The source of the desire to learn is inherent in the very nature of children's mental effort, in the emotional implications of their ideas, in their intellectual interests and aspirations. If this source runs dry, then no amount of effort is going to force a child to sit over his books. (10, 57)

Pupils, particularly those in their teens, are little moved by admonitions that seem so convincing to the teacher, in the vein: "You must work hard, you must do your duty as a pupil, your task is to study hard", etc. . . . Young people are anxious to form their own, personal ideas about things, to weigh things up and analyse them for themselves.

Pupils must be brought round to any idea, and particularly the idea that they should study hard, by degrees.

Not direct but indirect persuasion, when the figure of the teacher remains in the background, is likely to prove greatly effective. (3, 111)

Pupils must look upon newly acquired knowledge as the result of their own mental effort. . . . (3, 112)

The best teachers in our school devote special lessons to elucidation of the nature of work carried out by outstanding scientists. . . . There is every reason to regard such lessons as *character moulding* in the full sense of that word. (3, 114)

The more our schoolchildren came to master the skills involved in brain work, the less they expressed their *unwillingness to learn*. In 12 years we have only come across one pupil who deliberately and resentfully refused to do his homework. In all other cases unwillingness to learn was the result of an inability to work. (3, 131)

There are no such children, indeed there could not be, who would not want to learn from the very beginning of their school career. Inability to work gives rise to unwillingness, and unwillingness to laziness. Each new link in this chain of shortcomings grows ever firmer and breaking it becomes more and more difficult. The main means for forestalling these weaknesses is to teach pupils to carry out independent work from a very early age. (3, 133)

All our plans, quests and schemes will turn to nothing if a pupil is unwilling to learn. Willingness comes only once success has been achieved in class. A sort of paradox results: in order for a child to do well and make good progress in school, it is important that he should not lag behind, that he learn away. But this apparent paradox actually conceals the whole complexity of the teaching profession. Interest in learning is only to be found where there is inspiration born of success. Assiduity I should refer to as inspiration enhanced by a child's confidence that he will achieve success. (14, 8)

Study can become interesting for children and be fascinating, if it is brightened up by the glowing light of ideas, feelings, creativity, beauty and play. My efforts to ensure children make progress in their studies started with finding out whether a child was eating and sleeping properly, his general state of health, what games he played, how many hours a day he spent out in the fresh air, what books he used to read and what fairy-tales were read to him, what he used to draw and how he used to express his thoughts and feelings in drawing, what emotions were aroused in him by the music of nature, folk music and by melodies composed by musicians, what was his favourite form of work, how sensitive he was to other people's joys and misfortunes, what he used to make for others and the emotions he experienced. (10, 108)

Inquisitiveness and curiosity have been inalienable properties of human nature since time began. Where love of knowledge is lacking no school can thrive. Intellectual indifference, or poverty of intellectual response all blunt a child's receptiveness to wisdom, innovation and the wealth and beauty of ideas and knowledge. If no questions are forthcoming after a teacher has addressed the class during a lesson and "everything is clear", this is the first sign that the pupils in the class have ceased to experience intellectual needs and that all that remains is a tedious, wearisome obligation to learn the daily lesson. (14, 2)

Active thinking in the classroom starts when children begin to feel the urge to answer the questions put to them. To foster this urge the teacher must make sure that the mental activity engaged in has a definite goal. This is a most difficult task and achievement of this end is the surest indication of teaching skill. A child only searches for and moves towards answers to questions connected with phenomena, certain aspects of which are already familiar to him. If you tell a pupil from Classes 3 or 4 about something interesting but unfamiliar such as tides and then ask him why they behave the way they do, it is unlikely that he will feel any urge to find the answer to such a question. Yet if you tell the same child about plant life, about flowers, about how fruits grow and then ask him why sunflowers turn towards the sun, he will feel the urge to find the answer. (3, 154)

I advise all teachers to tend and foster any spark of curiosity, inquisitiveness or love of knowledge wherever they find it. The only way to fan that spark into a flame is to ensure that a child discovers the happiness of success in work, the pride of accomplishment. Reward each success, each conquest of difficulties with the deserved good mark, but do not overuse the latter. Do not forget that the soil on which the edifice of your teaching skill is built is in the child himself, in his attitude to knowledge and to you, his teacher; it is his desire to learn, his inspiration, his readiness to surmount diffi-

culties. Take care to enrich that soil, for without it no school can flourish. (10, 153)

There are teachers who regard as their prime accomplishment the fact that they have succeeded in creating an atmosphere of "constant mental concentration" in their class. More often than not they achieve this by external means, which act as a straight-jacket holding in place a child's attention: frequent reminders to listen attentively, abrupt transitions from one type of work to another, warnings that assimilation of new subject matter will be tested as soon as it has been presented (or rather threats of bad marks, if attention is not paid to what is being said), insistence that as soon as some theoretical concept has been explained it be exercised in practical assignments.

At first glance all these devices create the impression that energetic mental activity is going on: different types of work follow one after the other as in a kaleidoscope, children concentrate hard as they listen to every word the teacher says, and productive silence reigns. Yet at what cost is this achieved and what results does it yield? Constant stretching of the mind to remain attentive and ensure that nothing is missed—although pupils at this age are not yet able to force themselves to be attentive—wears children out making them overwrought and exhausted, and saps them of nervous energy. In work as subtle as that involved in the making of man there is nothing more stupid than insisting that not a moment

be lost during lesson-time and that active mental exertion never let up. A one-track approach like this simply means that teachers are attempting to squeeze out of their pupils everything the latter are capable of giving. After "effective" lessons of this kind a child goes home worn out. Such a child quickly loses his temper and easily becomes overexcited. All he needs to do is have a proper rest, while there is the prospect of homework to face and the mere sight of his school satchel loaded with books is enough to make him sick. (10, 101)

No, that price is far too high to pay to ensure attentiveness, concentration and mental exertion from a class. The mental and nervous energy of schoolchildren, especially those from the younger classes, is not a well that never runs dry. Water should be drawn from that well carefully and sensibly, and most important of all a child's nervous energy must be constantly replenished. This can be done through observation of objects and happenings in a child's immediate surroundings, through nature study, reading of a type designed to stimulate interests and the desire to discover, but not through instilling fear of failing to answer when called upon next time in class or through "voyages" to the sources of thought and knowledge. (10, 102)

In the life of a collective of schoolchildren there is an elusive factor which can perhaps be referred to as emotional equilibrium. By

this I mean children's awareness of the fullness of life, their clarity of thought, confidence in their own abilities and faith in their capacity for overcoming difficulties. Characteristic features of this emotional equilibrium is a peaceful atmosphere of purposeful work, stable friendly relationships, an absence of irritability. If there is no emotional equilibrium it is impossible to work normally; when the equilibrium is disrupted the life of the school becomes pure hell, for pupils start insulting and annoying each other and the school is fraught with bad temper.

How should this emotional equilibrium be created and, more important, maintained? The experience of leading education experts and teachers has convinced me that most important of all for this subtle aspect of education is constant mental activity, which avoids overexertion, jerky abrupt transitions, haste and nervous exhaustion. (10, 102)

It is always with great anxiety that I contemplate cases of mania to succeed and strive after the best marks, an ailment which takes root at home, infects teachers as well as pupils and which places sometimes a crippling heavy burden on the minds of young schoolchildren. If a child at a certain stage has not the capacity to achieve top marks in all subjects while his parents will content themselves with nothing but A's or at the most A minus, then whenever he is given lower marks he will feel a real criminal. (10, 103)

Vain, fruitless labour is repellent, stultifying and futile for the adult, let alone the unfortunate child. If a child sees no hope of success in his work, his eagerness for knowledge will be stifled, and cold bitterness will grip a child's heart which no effort whatsoever will be able to thaw out until the spark of eagerness lights up again (and kindling it a second time is an infinitely difficult task); a child loses faith in his capacity, shuts up like a clam, becomes wary and prickly, responds with brazen resentment to advice and remonstrations from his teachers. Or worse still—his sense of dignity is undermined and he reconciles himself to the thought that he has no real ability. My heart is always filled with anger and indignation, when I see one of these apathetic, resigned children who is ready to listen patiently to a teacher's exhortations for hours at a stretch and completely indifferent to the words of his classmates; when they reproach him with lagging behind or repeating a class. . . . There is nothing more immoral than kill another person's sense of dignity! (10, 142)

Assessing children's knowledge, which might at first glance appear a simple task, involves the teacher's ability to find a correct approach to each child, and encourage the thirst for knowledge in his heart. During their four years of primary education I never gave pupils bad marks, neither for written nor oral work. Children at that stage are learning to read, write and master the principles of arithmetics. One



child may already have achieved positive results in his mental exertions, while another may not yet have arrived at that level. One pupil may have mastered what the teacher is trying to get across to the class, while another may not yet have done so, but this does not mean that he is not eager to learn. I started giving pupils marks for their work only after a child was starting to make headway in his mental work. If a pupil had not yet achieved the results he was aspiring after in the process of his work then I refrained from giving him any marks at all. A child must be given time to think, collect his thoughts, and start at the beginning again. (10, 143)

From the very early days of his school career a child conceives of an idol on that thorny path to knowledge—excellent marks. For one child that idol will be a kind and accessible idol and for others the idol will be a cruel, pitiless and inexorable one. Children are unable to understand the reason why the idol takes one person under its wing and tyrannises another. A seven-year-old child cannot after all understand the connection between his marks and the work he does, his personal effort; the connection remains for the time being inscrutable. He tries to satisfy, or at least to deceive the idol and gradually learns to exert himself not for the sake of personal pleasure but for the sake of the mark. I am far from believing that marks should be ruled out of school practice altogether; they are

an unavoidable part of school life. But they should only be introduced to a child when he has already come to understand the connection between the quality of his intellectual achievement and the effort he devotes to his studies.

The most important, in my opinion, implication of marks in primary school are the enthusiasm and optimism they can impart. Marks should be a reward for diligence, not a punishment for laziness or negligence. If a teacher uses poor marks as a stick to goad on a lazy horse, and good marks as carrots, soon children will start to hate both the stick and the carrot. Poor marks are a very pointed and subtle instrument, which a wise, experienced teacher of primary pupils always keeps up his sleeve, without ever actually using. To be frank poor marks are an instrument which in primary school should exist precisely so as never to be used. The wisdom of the educator consists in making sure that a child never lose faith in his potential, and never come to believe that nothing will ever work out right for him. Each assignment must represent for the pupil at least a small advance. A seven-year-old who has only just entered school and is still hardly able to make out the letters of the alphabet is quite bewildered at receiving a bad mark and at first does not even feel bitterness or anxiety. He is simply stunned. "Sometimes a sensible child stops short in his tracks faced by the aggression of caustic, grey-haired stupidity," wrote Janusz Korczak. His words: "Respect children's lack of knowledge" are

something I have never forgotten. Only when a teacher has mastered the ultimate wisdom in knowledge of his fellow-men, namely the ability to respect children's lack of knowledge, do bad marks become the most pointed, subtle instrument at his command, yet one that is never to be used in primary classes. (10, 65)

An undeserved bad mark is often the beginning of one of the worst evils to be encountered in schools—deceitfulness on the part of a child in relation to both teachers and parents. There is no end to the kinds of subterfuge that children will resort to in order to conceal their failures at school from their parents and their negligence from their teachers. The more mistrust is shown a child the more resourceful a child becomes in deceit, the more fertile the soil for laziness and negligence. Laziness is a direct offshoot of mistrust. Those whom I teach I regard first and foremost as living individuals and children and only then as pupils. The marks I give them are not only assessments of their knowledge, but, far more important, they reflect my attitude to them as people. (10, 153)

In Class 2 a few weeks after the beginning of the school year children started to keep work records, in which they wrote down the marks given to them at lessons. There was not a single case of a child attempting to hide his marks from his parents. Indeed it will never be otherwise if marks reflect the joy children

glean from their success. All that is a source of joy children are unable to conceal from their parents. There is no need for a teacher to ratify work records with his signature; that is a practice left over from the past, from schools with an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion between teachers and pupils. If there is no mutual trust in a class, if children try to deceive their teacher, if marks degenerate into mere sticks used by adults to goad children on, then the very foundation of proper education has collapsed. (10, 153)

Yet at the same time it is impermissible that marks should spoil pupils, as is unfortunately far too often the case. Sometimes a child only has to open his mouth to be given an excellent mark. It happens quite often that at the lesson one and the same question is put to a number of pupils and each of them is given a good mark for his answer. As a result children start to develop a frivolous attitude to their studies. A child should always see in his marks the result of mental effort. (10, 152)

It is unforgivable to let marks become fetters for a child that hamper his thought. I always used to let even the weakest of pupils, the apparently hopeless dimwits, have time to think over problems that they had so far been unable to solve. My pupils never used to lose interest in their studies. Through stimulation of their sense of pride and honour, their sense of dignity I created an atmosphere in which

children went out of their way to learn how to work independently. (10, 151)

Certain teachers use the mark, that subtle instrument at their disposal, indiscriminately and unwisely. In many schools the satisfactory rating has come to be regarded as something reprehensible. It is not only at Pioneer rallies that the appeal for pupils to avoid marks as low as the satisfactory rating are to be heard. Such appeals can also be found in children's newspapers. By encouraging such an attitude to satisfactory ratings in schoolwork, teachers are in effect taking the wind out of their own sails: they are fostering in their children frivolity and superficiality. (10, 152)

When joy gleaned from work and successful study is the main stimulus for positive effort at school then a class will be free of loafers. True masters of the teaching craft rarely resort to campaigns with individual loafers, instead they campaign against laziness as a result of mental hibernation. (10, 152)

A system based on the principle that marks should only be given in recognition of positive results of mental effort was gradually introduced in the work of all teachers in the primary, middle and senior classes. Perhaps the reader will ask but what will happen at the end of the term or school year when it emerges that a pupil has not been given a mark for any subject? Yet this is the whole point, for the absence of any mark whatsoever is an

infinitely greater disaster for the child than unsatisfactory marks would have been. The idea that he has no mark because he has not yet worked as hard as he should have done takes root in the child's mind. This means that there are hardly any cases of children who by the end of the school year still have no marks. In four years there were only six occasions when I did not give a child any mark at the end of the term. The parents knew that if their son or daughter had no marks listed in his or her work record something was amiss. They also knew that an absence of marks is not the child's fault but rather his misfortune . . . and children should be helped in misfortune. And indeed, together we would help the child. I persuaded the parents never to demand top marks from their children and not to regard satisfactory ratings as indications of laziness, negligence and a lack of diligence. (10, 152)

A conscientious attitude to study is moulded over the years in the process of study itself and only thanks to the fact that the pupil is aware of his efforts and their results, namely knowledge and skills. (3, 187)

### **Children Should Live in a World of Creativity**

While stuffing their pupils' heads with ready-made truths, generalisations, and conclusions teachers sometimes fail to give chil-

dren the chance to even draw near to the source of ideas and living words, they tie down the wings of imagination, fantasy and creativity. Often a child can turn from a vital, active and energetic being into a memorising machine. . . . This should never be; children should never be isolated from the surrounding world by a stone wall so to speak. Pupils must not be robbed of the joys of the mind and spirit. A child only has a real emotional and intellectual life when he lives in a world of games, fairy-tales, music, fantasy and creativity. Without that he is no better than a pressed flower. (10, 57)

I tried to ensure that before my pupils opened their first book or spelt out their first word, they should read the pages of the most wonderful book in the whole world, the book of Nature.\*

Out among the beauties of Nature we teachers have a particularly vivid awareness of the fact that we are working with most delicate and sensitive of things in the natural world—a child's mind. When you think of a child's mind, you imagine a delicate rose on which quivers a dewdrop. What care and gentleness are needed to make sure that when you pick the flower the dewdrop is not lost! This is the care which we must show every moment, for we are working with that most sensitive

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\* Sukhomlinsky is describing here the preliminary studies he conducted with six-year-olds, which he referred to as the "School of Joy".

and delicate phenomenon of nature, the thought potential of the growing organism. (10, 26)

The famous German mathematician Felix Klein compared a high-school pupil with a cannon which is being charged with knowledge for ten years and then fired after which nothing remains. I thought back to that sad joke as I observed the mental exertions of a child who had been made to learn by heart material he had not thought through and which conjured up no vivid ideas, images or associations for him. To replace thought with memorisation, vivid perception and observation of the essence of phenomena with rote-learning is a serious drawback which stultifies a child, eventually destroying his will to learn. (10, 109)

Pondering this question I asked myself: why is it that after two or three years of instruction at school a child with a lively, vivid imagination, retentive memory, and sensitive emotional responses to phenomena of the world around him is incapable of learning a grammatical rule, how a word is spelt or what six nines make? This led me on to a conclusion no less sad than that of the German scholar: all too often the process of the assimilation of knowledge at school is isolated from the pupils' emotional and intellectual experience. A child's memory is sharp and tenacious precisely because a pure stream of vivid images, pictures, perceptions and ideas is pouring into it. Chil-



dren's minds strike us precisely on account of their subtle, unexpected "philosophical" questions, because these minds are being fed by the life-giving source of that stream. How important it is to prevent the school door shutting out from a child's mind the world around him. I strove to ensure that throughout their years of childhood the outside world and Nature were constantly stimulating our pupils' minds with vivid images, pictures, observations and ideas, that the children should apprehend the laws of logic as a harmonious edifice, the architecture of which had been prompted by a still more harmonious edifice—Nature. So as not to turn a child into a storehouse of knowledge, a depository of truths, rules and formulae, he must be taught to think. The very nature of the child's mind and memory demand that he should be ever aware of the vivid world around him, complete with all its laws and patterns. I am sure that the sharpness of a child's memory and vividness of thought not only need not be diminished when he enters school but can be enhanced, if the medium in which the child will learn to think, remember and reason is the world around him. (10, 110)

I am very concerned by the condescending attitude many school heads and inspectors show towards primary classes. When an inspector comes to a school he so often interests himself mainly in the senior and middle classes, while his attitude to the junior ones is as if he regarded what goes on in them as some form

of game rather than real education. Touched by the spectacle of this game inspectors' emotions would abruptly change to anxiety when finding that pupils in Class 5 are ill-prepared.

When embarking on my work with small children I determined to rule out any sentimentality. I made it my aim to ensure that by the end of Class 2 they should be able to read so fluently, expressively and intelligently that they could take in at a glance small sentences and phrases of large sentences as whole units. Reading is one of the levers of thought and mental development. I resolved to teach my pupils to read in such a way that they should *think* as they did so. Reading has to become a subtle instrument with which a child can master new knowledge and at the same time it must be a source of rich intellectual and cultural experience. (10, 37)

Lessons out of doors taught me how to open up for children a window into the outside world and I attempted to impart that experience and knowledge to other teachers. I advised them not to inundate a child with a regular torrent of knowledge, to avoid telling children everything they know about a subject at lesson-time, for with the torrent of knowledge they risk washing away inquisitiveness and love of knowledge. I urged them to learn to reveal things in the outside world one at a time to a child but in such a way that each fragment of that world revealed shone before that child in all its true rich colours, always to

leave something unsaid, so that a child will be interested to return again and again to what he has newly found out. (10, 33)

Even among a group of pre-school children it will be possible to pick out the "theoreticians" and the "dreamers". The "theoreticians" show interest in minute detail, persevere till they reach the heart of the matter and show a marked inclination for deduction. The "dreamers" and "poets" apprehend an object or phenomenon in its overall contours, they are impressed by the beauty of a sunset, a menacing storm cloud, they take delight in the play of colours, while the "theoreticians" will be asking why the sky is sometimes blue and sometimes red. . . .

In each child ideas develop along their own paths; each one is clever and talented in his own particular way. No child is completely bereft of ability or gifts. It is important that his mind and his talents should provide the foundation for success in his studies, and that every pupil progress according to the best of his ability. (14, 8)

Children should live in a world of beauty, play, fairy-tales, music, drawing, imagination and creativity. This world 'should still surround a child when the time comes for him to read and write. His whole future progress in study depends on how much he feels at ease when he climbs the first step of the ladder to knowledge, on what he experiences at that

vital stage. It is terrifying to think that for many young children this first step turns into a stumbling block. If you study closely the life of schools, you will observe that precisely at the stage when children are first learning to read and write many of them lose faith in their own ability. Let us, my dear colleagues, resolve to alight on that step in such a way that the children should not feel tired; in such a way so that every step towards knowledge should be like the proud flight of a bird and not the tired trudge of an exhausted traveller worn out by the overwhelming burden on his back. (10, 66)

I strove to make words more for the children than mere designations of things, objects or phenomena; I wanted them to see words as something which bore within themselves emotional implications, subtle flavours and nuances all of their own. It was important that the beauty of a word and the beauty of the particle of the world, which that word reflected, stimulated interest in those drawings which convey the music of sounds that is human speech—namely letters. Until a child has sensed the flavour of a word, has grasped its subtlest nuances, there is no use even starting to teach him to read and write, and if a teacher does so then he is condemning the child to immensely difficult toil (a child will come to grips with the task eventually, but what a price has to be paid in the process!). (10, 66)

For several years now I have been thinking to myself, what a difficult, exhausting and uninteresting task it is for a child to tackle reading and writing at the very beginning of his school career, how many setbacks children have to face on the thorny path to knowledge—and all because their studies are made a purely bookish affair. I have watched children at class straining every muscle to make out letters, how the letters seem to jump around on the page before them and then merge together in a pattern in which it is impossible for them to understand. Yet I have also observed how easy it is for children to recognise letters, put them together to make words, when this occupation is enhanced by interest or made part of a game, and what is particularly important, no one insists that the child must memorise everything because there will be trouble in store for him otherwise. (10, 64)

The process of teaching children how to read and write will be an easy one provided that this activity is presented to pupils as a colourful, intriguing slice of life, rich in vivid images, sounds and melodies. Things which a child has to remember must above all be made interesting. Instruction in reading and writing must be closely linked up with drawing. (10, 67)

In our “journeys” to the sources of language we set off armed with drawing books and pencils. On one of the first such journeys I set

out to show my pupils the beauty and subtle nuances of the word "meadow". We sat down under a willow-tree with branches stretching out over a pond. In the distance we could see a meadow bathed in sunlight. I said to the children: "Look at that beautiful sight before us. Butterflies are fluttering over the grass and bees are buzzing. Over there is a herd of cows so tiny as to look like toy ones. The meadow looks like a pale green river and the trees like its dark green banks. The cows are bathing in the river. Look how many beautiful flowers early autumn has spread out before us. And let us listen to the music of the meadow: can you hear the faint buzzing of the midges, and the chirring of the grasshopper?" (10, 67)

Then I drew the meadow in my drawing book: I drew the cows and geese scattered about like white down, the trail of smoke almost out of sight and the little white cloud over the horizon. The children were captivated by the beauty of that quiet morning and also started drawing. Under the drawing I wrote the word: meadow. For most small children letters are indeed drawings in themselves. The children wrote the same caption under their drawings. Then we read the word together. A sensitive awareness of the music of Nature helps children to get the feel of a word's cadence. It helps them to memorise the shape of each letter; the children impart a life of its own to each drawing and the letter is easy to memorise. The shape of a word is apprehend-

ed as an entity and then the word can be read easily—such reading is not the fruit of lengthy exertions in the analysis and synthesis of sounds, but the conscious reproduction of a sound or musical image which corresponds to the visual image of a word, that the children have just been drawing. This coincidence and unity of visual and aural perception possessed of a wealth of emotional nuances, inherent in both the visual image and the musical cadence of the word, ensures that both the letters and the little word itself will be memorised simultaneously. Dear reader, this is not a discovery of some new method for the teaching of reading. It is the practical implementation of what has been demonstrated by science: it is easier to memorise something which you are not obliged to memorise. The emotional implications of images to be apprehended play an outstandingly important role in memorisation. (10, 67)

Days and weeks passed as I kept on taking the children out for “journeys” to the sources of living language. Particularly interesting were our encounters with the words: village, oak, willow, wood, smoke, ice, hill, wheat, sky, hay, grove, lime, ash, apple, cloud, acorn. In the spring our “journeys” were centred round such words as: flower, lilac, lily, acacia, grape, pond, river, lake, mist, rain, storm, dawn, pigeon, poplar, cherry. On each occasion, the child, for whom the word evoked the most colourful ideas, emotions and memories, drew the relevant picture in the class album entitled

*Our Native Words.* No one proved indifferent to the beauty of his native language: ... a mere eight months after joining the pre-school class the children knew all their letters and could write words and read.

At this point I should warn teachers about mechanically adopting my methods lock, stock and barrel. Instruction in reading and writing using this method is a creative activity and stereotypes are alien to any creativity. Taking over something new must be done creatively. (10, 69)

It is very important that children should not be confronted with an obligatory task of learning off their letters and learning to read. My pupils made their first steps on the road to knowledge in the course of games; their studies were illumined by beauty, fairy-tales, music, fantasy, creativity and their imaginations given free rein. The children memorised firmly what had appealed to their emotions and bewitched them with its beauty. I was struck by the ardent desire of many children not only to express their feelings in words but also to write down words. (10, 69)

Why do children read in such a monotonous expressionless way? Why when children read they lend no emotional overtones to the content before them? It is because in many instances reading is presented as something quite separate from children's intellectual experience, from thought, feelings and ideas. One



set of things fascinates a child and he is made to read about quite different ones. Reading only enriches the life of a child if the words, the stories relate to what is dear to their hearts. (10, 71)

Why did my pupils memorise their letters so easily and learn to read and write with such little trouble? Because reading was not presented to them in the form of an obligatory objective; because for those children each letter was the embodiment of a vivid image which thrilled them. If I had apportioned to each of those children a daily "ration of knowledge"—showed them a letter and demanded they learn it—nothing would have come of it. This of course does not mean that the ultimate goal of his activities should be hidden from a child. Teaching should be done in such a way that children are not thinking about their ultimate objective as they work towards it. This lightens their mental exertion no end. (10, 101)

I have deep respect for didactics and abhor wishful thinking. Yet life itself demands that the mastery of knowledge should commence by degrees, and that study—a child's most serious and painstaking task—should at the same time be happy work that consolidates his intellectual and physical potential. This is particularly important for very young children who are not yet able to grasp the ultimate objective of their work and the essence of the difficulties they encounter.

It has been said a thousand times that study involves hard work and cannot be reduced to anything but play. Yet no rigid dividing line should be drawn between work and play. We should study carefully the place which play occupies in a child's life, particularly at the pre-school stage. For him play is the most serious undertaking of all. In play the world is opened up to young children, the creative capacities of the individual. Without play there is no and indeed cannot be genuine mental development. Play is an enormous radiant window through which the life-giving stream of ideas, concepts about the surrounding world pours into the child's emotional and intellectual world. Play is the spark which kindles curiosity and love of knowledge. What then is so terrible about a child learning to write through playing, about play being interwoven with work at some stage of a child's intellectual development? And as a rule quite rare is the case when a teacher lets children have some play before getting down to their work. (10, 81)

If we adults were able to look at the world and at ourselves through the eyes of a seven-year-old, in that most artless play we would pick out serious things, phenomena and events.

In play no one is more serious than small children. As they play, not only do they laugh but they are profoundly moved and sometimes suffer. But if a teacher tries to rechannel that youthful seriousness to study activities, nothing will come of it. It is impossible to trans-

mit to the mind of a small child the importance and social significance of the mastering of knowledge. He senses rather than understands the respect shown by society to the intelligent and erudite. This instinctive awareness must be used in our efforts to find access to a child's mind, gradually to convince him of the need to study. . . . It all depends on the art of the teacher whether a child comes to regard his studies, his acquisition of knowledge as an activity which is useful and essential to society. Experience has shown that the earlier a child comes round to this view, the richer his intellectual life will be, and the more profound will be his awareness of his own sense of dignity. This attitude to study takes shape first and foremost on the basis of the child's experience of positive emotions, such as joy and satisfaction, in connection with the successes he scores in this domain. (6, 77)

During the opening weeks of the school year I used to introduce children gradually to this new life. Their lessons at this stage differed in essence little from the "School of Joy" they had known before, and this indeed was what I had been working towards. In September we spent no more than forty minutes actually inside the classroom, and in October no more than two hours. This time was devoted to writing and arithmetic lessons. The other two hours we used to spend outside. The children would look forward impatiently to their *real lesson* as they called their indoor sessions.

I was glad to see that and thought to myself: "If you only knew, children, how other children of your age, worn out in a stuffy classroom, long for the break-bell." (10, 97)

If the time spent by a child in the classroom is measured in terms of lessons, then in the first two months of the academic year there was one lesson a day, in the third and fourth months there were two, in the fifth and sixth months two and a half, and in the seventh and eighth months three lessons. In the first two months these lessons lasted for half an hour each and later for forty-five minutes. If a child needed to leave the classroom before the break-bell he would do so after asking permission. If it was at a time when it was inconvenient to interrupt the teacher, then a child would go out without asking permission: the teacher would see that the pupil needed to leave the room, and he would give his silent consent. However, some children found it difficult to adapt to the school discipline that the overwhelming majority found so easy to comply with. Tolya, Katyа, Kostya and Shura used to tire quickly. They were more likely than not exhausted by the strain they experienced, sitting at their desks and realising that their free scope for action was now far more circumscribed by a set routine than before. Of course it is wrong to indulge all pupils' wishes: gradually all pupils have to be brought round to painstaking, serious work, but children's wishes should not be quashed or their habits broken too decisively.

For a few weeks I allowed these children to leave the classroom in the middle of lesson time, gradually training them to embark on painstaking work. Three or four months after the beginning of the academic year all the children were keeping to the school routine. (10, 99)

Experience has shown there should not be any lessons in "pure", "unadulterated" reading, writing or arithmetic for pupils who have just entered Class 1. Monotony quickly tires young pupils. As soon as the children started to grow tired, I tried to switch to a new type of work. An effective means for livening up their work routine was drawing. When I saw that reading was starting to tire the pupils I would say: "Children, open your drawing books, and we shall do pictures of the fairy-tale I have just been reading to you." At that the first signs of tiredness would disappear, and bright sparks would appear in the children's eyes—joyful glints, for repetitive monotonous activity was giving way to creativity. . . . (10, 98)

A child thinks in images, colours and sounds, but this does not mean that he has to go no further than the stage of concrete thought. Thought based on images is an essential stage for the transition to thought involving concepts. I set out to help the children gradually to master such concepts as: *phenomenon, cause, consequence, event, dependence, difference, similarity, community, compatibility, incompatibility,*

*possibility, impossibility.* Long experience has convinced me that these concepts play an important part in the development of abstract thought. Mastering these concepts is impossible without investigation of actual facts and phenomena, without elucidation of what a child sees with his own eyes, without a gradual transition from concrete objects, facts and phenomena to abstract generalisations. Questions which occur to children as they study Nature are precisely such as facilitate that transition. I taught my charges to observe concrete phenomena of Nature, and to distinguish causal relationships. Thanks to the close link between the thought pattern and concrete images the children gradually assimilated abstract concepts. Of course this was a long process which took several years. (10, 114)

An important role was assigned to the game of chess in our work designed to develop more sophisticated thought patterns. Even at the "School of Joy" stage the small boys and girls had often been absorbed in chess. It served to discipline their thought and help their capacity for concentration. Most important of all it helps to develop memory. Observing young chess-players I noticed that children were capable of mentally reproducing a situation that had existed and imagining one that would develop during the game. I was eager to start Valya, Nina and Petrik off on the game. I taught them how to play, and they were soon working out their moves in advance. Chess

also helped me ascertain Lyuba's and Pavel's mathematical bent. Before starting to play chess (these children started playing in Class 3) I had not noticed their acute mental vision.

Without the help of chess it is impossible to develop a child's mental ability and memory to the full. Chess at the primary school is an essential element in the child's intellectual development. It is precisely at the primary school stage when intellectual guidance is particularly important and demands special forms and methods of work. (10, 132)

I recommended to other teachers that if a pupil did not understand something, if as he grappled with ideas, he was floundering helplessly, like a bird caught in a cage, they should pay careful attention to their own work and ask themselves whether the mind of the child had not become a small dried-out lake cut off from the eternal life-giving source of thought, the world of real objects, of natural phenomena? If the little lake is linked to the ocean of Nature, of things and the surrounding world, you will then see how the spring of vital thought pours forth. (10, 147)

However it would be wrong to consider that the world around a child teaches a child to think on his own. Without abstract thought, things remained hidden from children's eyes as if by an impenetrable wall. Nature becomes a school of mental activity only when a child is able to abstract himself from the things around

him, when he can do his own abstract thinking. Vivid images from the real world are essential to help a child discover the interactions which are one of the principal features of the surrounding world. (10, 148)

I thought over everything that was to become a source of ideas for my charges and decided what they should observe day by day during those first four years and what phenomena from the world around them should be sources of their new ideas. That was how I amassed the material for the three hundred pages of my "Book of Nature". It consists of three hundred observations, three hundred vivid pictures which imprinted themselves on the minds of the children. Twice a week we went on country walks to learn to think; not just to observe, but to learn to think. In essence those sessions were lessons in thought—lessons, not just entertaining walks. Yet the fact that a lesson can be very entertaining and very interesting makes it all the more emotionally and mentally stimulating for the children concerned. (10, 111)

The more abstract truths and generalisations have to be taken in during a lesson, the more concentrated the mental exertion required, the more frequently a pupil should turn back to the original source of knowledge—to the world of Nature—and the more vividly the images and pictures from the surrounding world will imprint themselves upon his mind.



Yet vivid images do not imprint themselves on a child's mind as easily as on celluloid. Mental pictures, however vivid they might be, are not an end in themselves and not the ultimate goal of instruction. Mind training begins when theoretical thought emerges, when active meditation is not the end but a means to an end: the vivid image from the surrounding world should provide a lever for the teacher, the various forms, colours and sounds of which should stimulate thousands of questions. As he unravels the resultant questions the teacher is, as it were, leafing through the "Book of Nature". (10, 111)

We live at a time when mastering scientific knowledge is essential for our work, a basic understanding of human relationships, or the performance of basic civic duties. Study cannot be an easy or pleasant game, a source of nothing but delight and pleasure. The young citizen's path through life will not be a casual walk along a well-trodden route. We must prepare highly educated, diligent and persevering people ready to surmount difficulties no less considerable than those surmounted by their fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers. The level of knowledge attained by young people of the seventies, eighties and nineties will be immeasurably higher than the level of knowledge characteristic of the younger generation in earlier decades. The wider the range of knowledge that needs to be mastered, the more important it will become to bear in

mind the peculiarities of the human organism at the period of rapid growth, development and character formation—that is childhood. As before, man will still remain a son of Nature and that which brings him close to Nature must be used for his initiation into the riches of our cultural heritage. The world that surrounds the child is first and foremost a natural world of inexhaustible beauty and diversity. The eternal source of the child's reason should be sought in Nature. But at the same time every year increasing importance must be ascribed to those elements of his environment which are connected with social relations, with work. (10, 12)

### **A True School Is a Kingdom of Active Thought**

A child who has never known the joy of work in the context of his study and who has not experienced pride in overcoming difficulties is a most wretched person. A wretched man is a misfortune for our society, and a wretched child is a misfortune one hundred times over. I am far from being sentimental when I speak about childhood; it is a cause of constant regret to me that some people can become idlers while still children start hating work and even regard with contempt the very idea that they should work to the utmost of their capacity. But why do children become idlers? Because, dear fellow teachers, they do

not know the *happiness to be derived from work*. Once they have known that happiness and learnt to set store by it, then they will start to set store by their honour and start to enjoy their work.

The first commandment for the teacher should be to let children experience the joy of work, the joy of success in their studies and to arouse a sense of pride, a sense of dignity in children's hearts. In our schools there should not be any wretched children, children whose minds are gnawed at by the idea that they are not capable of anything. Success in study is the only fountain at which a child can replenish his inner resources, which gives him energy with which to surmount the difficulties he encounters and fan his desire to study. (10, 143)

The most important work position for a schoolchild is his desk in his classroom, or a table in the school laboratory.... The main material for his work are textbooks and exercise books, and the main work to be done in school is study. (31)

A true school is a kingdom of active thought. If a pupil in, for instance, Class 8 has been instructed to read at home some ten pages of a textbook he will only be engaging in active thought if he reads that same day 20, 30 or 40 pages of some interesting academic book or journal, not just for the sake of learning it off by heart but in response to his need to think, discover, learn, and finally to attain wonder.

Einstein wrote that the most beautiful and profound emotion we experience is a sense of mystery; he who has lost that awareness, who is no longer capable of growing awestruck, might just as well consider himself dead. It is with deep sorrow that I behold those living corpses crippled by excessive hours spent tied to their books. (31)

Deterioration of memory tends to strike precisely at puberty and the reason for this is that young people shake themselves "free" from the obligation to think, precisely at the time when they ought to be devoting the maximum energy to that activity. (14, 8)

A few years ago the teachers in our school came to the conclusion that teacher's efforts to make literally everything completely comprehensible and accessible in his exposition of material (as they recounted or explained) frequently mean that pupils are no longer obliged to think. . . . There will be no assimilation of knowledge if a teacher strives to the utmost to simplify his pupils' mental exertion. . . .

Our brain develops thanks to abstract thought and this is something every teacher should bear in mind, making it one of his basic principles. (13, 7)

Experience has convinced me that the more pupils have to remember and retain (and the amount of material to be memorised in middle and senior classes is very large) the more need

there is for generalisation, for *abstraction* from concrete material, for thinking and discussion. (14, 8)

Mental effort should never be aimed *merely* at retention, at rote-learning. Once analysis ceases, so does mental effort and all that is left is stultifying cramming. (3, 169)

Cramming has a disastrous effect on the moral integrity of the pupil. As he carries out his heavy yet futile work day after day in the course of several years, a pupil acquires an incorrect picture of mental work in general and starts to hate study. In the long run he stops working. (3, 178)

In order to satisfy young people's need to engage in abstract thought, to analyse facts, the teacher as he presents his material must provide many facts and few generalisations. The most interesting material or lectures for pupils of the senior and middle classes is that in which something has been left unsaid. When we present pupils with facts, we should ask of pupils that they analyse and compare them. The transition from facts to broad conclusions is in my experience an intense, emotionally charged moment, like the conquest of a peak, a victory or triumph for the pupil. . . .

The easier the subject (for example botany is considerably easier than mathematics in the complexity of the thought processes involved) the more indifferent young people will be when it comes to amassing their factual "baggage". (14, 8)

Observations of young people's behaviour shows that they deliberately do not notice details; what is too blatant or obvious seems to them unworthy of their attention, because it does not demand serious mental effort. This explains incidentally young people's scornful attitude to literal, word-for-word rote-learning and their preference for carrying out difficult work of a creative nature as opposed to memorising poetry for instance. (16, 122)

Young people have particular respect for those academic subjects which demand considerable mental effort, ingenuity and astuteness. This applies particularly in the case of mathematics. Study circles for young mathematicians, in which problems are set to develop their imagination and resourcefulness occupy a most important place in the lives of our boys and girls.

Experience has made it clear to us that the teaching of mathematics to pupils of that age determines to a large extent the way in which a young person's interest in intellectual activity develops, indeed his whole intellectual make-up. Gradually his awareness of the great importance of abstraction and generalisation sharpens purely intellectual sensitivity to the causal relationships in the outside world. They show a conscious urge to analyse in their mind's eye what they may have no opportunity to observe closely. Self-evident, obvious causal relationships will not only fail to enhance but will even diminish their interest in a phenomenon or event. (6, 125)

The most important skills which a pupil has to master in the course of his ten years' schooling I listed as follows:

1. Fluent, expressive, perceptive reading;
2. Fluent, relatively rapid and correct reproduction in writing of texts dictated by teachers;
3. Thinking, comparing and contrasting objects and phenomena;
4. Detailed observation of phenomena from his environment;
5. The expression of ideas in words;
6. The singling out of logically complete parts from a text that has been read through, and the establishment of the links and interdependences between them;
7. The finding and selection of a book on a subject of interest;
8. The finding of relevant material on a subject of interest in a book;
9. Advance logical analysis of a text during the process of reading it;
10. Listening to a teacher and at the same time making notes on the main points of the material presented;
11. Reading a text while at the same time listening to the teacher's instructions concerning work on the text and its logical component parts;
12. Writing an essay telling of what the pupil sees around him and observes, etc. . . . (13, 11)

Just as a carpenter cannot make a ruler with an axe, so a pupil who is unable to write sufficiently rapidly and correctly cannot write an essay or make notes on a teacher's lecture. Scientifically grounded guidance of education, which envisages a correct approach to pupils' skills and abilities, makes it possible to provide pupils with a firm base for their secondary education, namely with the ability to study. If we observe attentively pupils going about their homework, we shall see that they are carpenters vainly attempting to make a ruler with an axe or a hatchet. A child not yet proficient in reading is asked to grasp and learn the reasons for the emergence and decline of the slave-owning state in ancient Greece.... A child not yet proficient in writing is asked to go home and write a composition entitled "A Sunny Winter Day"....

Before giving children difficult home assignments they must be armed with the complex skills required. (13, 11)

Without high levels of reading ability there can be no real school education, and no real brain work. Poor reading levels are like dirty windows through which nothing can be seen. (31)

In order for a child to make good progress at school his writing skills must become more or less automatic: his mental effort must be aimed first and foremost at understanding the sense of what he is writing, on thinking, and



not on the actual process of writing. Long experience has shown me that in order to learn to write quickly, clearly and intelligently, and in order that writing should be a means or instrument for study and not its ultimate goal, a pupil during his years of primary education ought to complete between 1,400 and 1,500 pages of writing in his exercise books. For this purpose special practice is required to develop writing speed and technique. (11, 285)

Helping a pupil reliably to memorise a rule (definition or conclusion) without specially sitting down to do so is a particularly valuable achievement on the part of the skilled teacher. In primary classes we avoid learning off rules, just as we avoid testing knowledge of the latter by asking pupils to repeat by heart these rules. If a pupil does not know or has forgotten this or that rule (that has never been formally memorised) he needs to do repeated exercises and analyse factual material, designed to think it through again and only after having understood it to remember it.

It is just as important that a child should not be made to learn a rule ahead of time as it is to ensure that he understands the material concerned. Sometimes it is essential that a pupil forget a rule, put it out of his mind, since the formula is something he does not understand; he must then start from the beginning again so as to think through the essence of the facts and phenomena concerned. (11, 265)

All the most vital rules, definitions, laws and other generalisation formulae that have to be incorporated into the first five years at school (Classes 1-5) are memorised *only* through work in class and *only* with the help of explanations, and not from textbooks. . . . This makes it possible for pupils during those five years to memorise rules and other formulae *before they start reading textbooks*, which means that later they will never just cram them without understanding their meaning. (3, 174)

The more vividly the meaning of concepts is revealed, the more expressive the teacher's explanations and the more the pupils understand of what they are called upon to remember, the better they will retain material until they are called upon to complete special assignments designed to consolidate the knowledge in question . . . . When schoolchildren's mental effort is directed towards understanding, towards analysing material they should not be called upon to work towards yet another goal, namely its retention. (3, 172)

If consolidation of knowledge is not based on active thinking, but only on effort of the memory, on rote-learning, the act of memorising not only absorbs all a child's mental effort, but checks and holds back his development. This danger is particularly great in Classes 1-4. It is precisely at that stage when, as a result of weakness and errors in work designed to consolidate knowledge, pupils start to feel a sense of revulsion in relation to their studies. (3, 173)

Idleness at the school desk is a terrible danger: idleness for six hours at a stretch every day, for months and years on end corrupts and cripples a child's character and moral principles; no school workteam, no workshop, no school garden, indeed nothing can make up for what has been lost in the most important field of human activity, a field where one has to be a worker, that of thought. (31)

I am profoundly convinced that if everyone seated at a school desk did some hard thinking then no one would be condescending about the work of a plumber or tractor-driver, stone mason or cowman because real mental work is something devilishly difficult . . . . If thought is equated with work and school becomes a kingdom of work, then those who pass through school will develop profound respect for any kind of work. . . . The individual's mental activities and physical exertion can only become as one, when thinking and comprehension of the world are a work process. (31)

**To Give Pupils a Spark of Knowledge,  
the Teacher Must Imbibe  
a Whole Sea of Light**

It is difficult to overestimate the role of the individual teacher, his mind and knowledge in arousing and developing pupils' ability, inclinations and talents. If among a school's team of

teachers there is a talented teacher of mathematics in love with his subject, able and talented mathematicians are bound to emerge from among the pupils. If there is no good maths teacher there will not be any talented pupils; in such a case those who possess mathematical ability will never manifest that ability. A teacher is the first torch-bearer in a child's intellectual progress. . . . (9, 26)

Our team of teachers has grown up gradually. They were selected according to the following principle: firstly their moral right to teach and educate children; secondly their diligence; thirdly their love for children and faith in the fact that every child, whatever problems his education might involve, can turn out a worthwhile person. If someone possesses these qualities his lack of experience in teaching methods is no disaster; initial gaps in his knowledge are also not the end of the world—if he is energetic and has a thirst for knowledge he can continue his own studies while working in school as a teacher. If someone has no faith in children, if he is daunted by the slightest setback or convinced that nothing can come of a child's schooling, then he has no business to be in a school: all he will do is cripple his charges' future. (9, 28)

The question as to whether someone has a vocation as a teacher or not, as to whether he should remain in our school or not is decided on a strictly corporate basis—by a resolution of

the teachers' council—in strict accordance with the following rule: the corporate decision on such an important question is considered valid when it is taken unanimously, i.e., when the teacher in question, whose future is at stake, himself accepts that teaching is not his vocation. (9, 29)

The most important preconditions for educating strong, courageous builders of communism is that the convictions and practical activities of those who educate them be truly revolutionary, communist and future-orientated and that they appreciated above all this point: the education of the individual from the very beginning of his conscious life must be closely linked with the implementation of social ideas. (7, 20)

What does the phrase *good teacher* imply? First of all it means someone who loves children, who finds joy in contact with them and who believes that every child can become a worthy man or woman, someone who is able to make friends with children, who takes children's joys and sorrows to heart, understands the workings of their minds and never forgets that he himself was once a child too.

A good teacher is, secondly, someone who has a good grasp of the science of which the subject he teaches is a part, is really in love with that subject and keeps up-to-date with its development—new discoveries, research and achievements. The schools should pride themselves

in particular in teachers who, in addition to possessing the characteristics cited earlier, are not indifferent to the problems currently confronting the researchers working in his own particular field and are capable of undertaking independent research. A good teacher knows far more than the secondary school syllabus requires of him. For him his subject is merely the alphabet of science. Profound knowledge, a wide perspective and interest in current problems of his field are all essential for a teacher in order that he might present as attractive to his pupils the knowledge as such, his subject in particular, science and the process of study. The pupil must see in his teacher an intelligent, well-informed, thinking individual in love with knowledge. The more profound a teacher's knowledge, the wider his horizons, and general erudition, the more he will be able not merely to instruct his pupils but to educate them. For a teacher of primary classes it is essential that he should have not merely a good general education but also particular interest in some specific subject or field of knowledge.

Thirdly, a good teacher must be well-versed in psychology and the science of education; he must understand that it is impossible without grounding in the science of education to work with children.

Fourthly, a good teacher must be completely at home in some type of handicraft or manual work. . . . In a good school every teacher must have some hobby of this sort which he finds truly fascinating.

Where are people with such versatile abilities to be found? There are such people in our midst and we must learn how to find them. I always strove to ensure my right to select teachers independently and hold that it is impossible to run a school properly otherwise. (11, 40)

I set out to ensure that for me as director questions of education always took pride of place, as opposed to administrative ones. Each day I spend 10-15 minutes early in the morning before class discussing with the administrative bursar questions and then have done with such matters for the rest of the day. Everything connected with administrative affairs which occurs to me I note down (in preparation for my next talk with the bursar or for my next staff meeting: a large proportion of the school's administrative affairs are discussed in connection with educational matters, to which they are always subordinated; discussed by children and teachers on a joint basis). (11, 39)

I see my most important task as supervisor of the school to be to ensure that teachers become thoughtful researchers with a thirst for knowledge. Elements of the scientific quest and scientific deduction from individual study are intrinsic to truly creative teaching. . . . (13, 9)

I should have not stayed a single day in the school without the moral approval of all the teachers there for my work as director. . . . (11, 41)

Ideas about teaching are the wings on which the creativity of a whole collective of teachers soars aloft. Ideas inspire the collective and provide the stimulus for joint research work—the most interesting and vital activity in school life. (11, 93)

Friendly, frank, sincere conversation on a man-to-man basis is the best method for effective work between school head and his teachers. Education is the most subtle of intellectual activities. Indeed I should compare the impact of the educator on his charges with the impact of music.

Tolstoy wrote that to shape intellectual activity by force was tantamount to catching sun-rays: for whatever you might try to cover them up with, they would always come out on top again. I can recall thousands of conversations I have had with teachers, some of which filled my heart with joy and others with disappointment. I have sometimes spent one, two or even three hours talking with a teacher in respect of a single word of his, or even a smile or an angry look. (11, 31)

Anyone who understands everything he sees going on in a lesson is a bad director and useless teacher. You must be able to notice what is vague and poorly explained, and joint discussion with the teacher concerned about such presentation is the first stimulus in the direction of scientific quest and investigation. (13, 2)



The very logic, philosophical foundation and creative nature of teaching make the activity impossible without scientific research. If you are anxious for teaching to be a source of joy for those engaged in it, and that the daily round of lessons does not become a tedious, monotonous obligation, a mere formal procedure, then set every teacher on the path of research into the science of education. (13, 2)

The close relationship between the work of the teacher and scientific research consists first and foremost in the analysis of factual material and the need to anticipate which both involve. The teacher who is unable or unwilling to think through factual material in depth and also the causal relationships between facts, turns into a mere hack and his work, bereft of the skill to anticipate, becomes torture for the pupils and himself alike. (13, 2)

A teacher is preparing for good lessons for as long as he lives. . . . Such is the intellectual and philosophical foundation of our profession and the techniques of our work: in order to give pupils a spark of knowledge the teacher must imbibe a whole sea of light. (13, 2)

An erudite, perceptive and experienced teacher does not sit glued to his desk for long periods as he prepares for his lessons, he does not devise detailed plans for each of his lessons, and still less likely is he to include in that plan details of the factual material for the

given lesson. All his life he is in search of new ideas and material to enrich his lessons. (13, 2)

Without the ability to anticipate and to plan work in the classroom a teacher's work is impossible, but a good lesson is planned only in outline in the teacher's mind; a good lesson, truly creative activity on the part of the teacher, takes shape as it goes along. (13, 7)

A good teacher—to be honest—does not know how a lesson with all its details and offshoots will develop: this is not because he is working in the dark, but because he knows quite well what a good lesson involves. (13, 7)

When a teacher's range of knowledge is infinitely wider than the school curriculum, when his grasp of the syllabus material is not of central interest to him but a side issue of his mental activity, so to speak, then and only then is he a true master of his profession, an artist, a poet of the classroom. A master of the teaching profession knows the elementary steps of his science so well that at lesson-time, while that elementary material is being studied, *his attention* is concentrated not on the content of what is being studied, but on the pupils, their mental activity, their thought processes and the difficulties they encounter in their mental activity.

How can we ensure that each teacher knows not merely the elementary material he is presenting, but the background and sources of his subject?

Reading, reading and reading yet again. Reading not at the instigation or under supervision of the director, but as an essential intellectual need, vital food for the mind. A love of reading, browsing through books, the ability to pore over books and ruminate must be fostered: how best to ensure that reading became an instinctual need for every teacher? Here there are and indeed can be no specific methods for "educational work". This need for reading is fostered by the intellectual climate created by the body of teachers in the school as a whole. (13, 10)

The source of the staff's intellectual wealth is first and foremost their individual reading. The true teacher is a book-lover. (11, 46)

Our school library contains eighteen thousand books and the personal libraries of the teachers total over 49 thousand volumes. The personal library belonging to the literature teacher Daragan, for instance, numbers over a thousand volumes, physics teacher Philippov possesses 1,200, and director of studies Lysak over 1,500, language and literature teachers Skochko and Reznik own 1,400 and 1,500 respectively, handicrafts teacher Voroshilo has over 1,800, while at our home my wife and I managed to collect a library containing over 19,000 volumes of fiction, history, works on education and the history and theory of art. (11, 46)

Of central importance to a school's atmosphere and the teaching that goes on in it are

love and an almost reverent respect for books. If a school has everything else but is poorly supplied with books vital for furthering the all-round development of the pupils and enriching their intellectual life, or if the pupils feel indifference rather than love for books then it is no school worthy of the name. A school can be poorly supplied with many things and still get by, it can be a modest establishment in many respects, yet if it has books necessary to open up a wide window into the outside world, then it will still be a real school. (11, 46)

Often you can hear the expression: "a teacher must...". He "must" prepare his lessons well, leave all his personal and family worries and troubles outside the door of the classroom. He "must" be able to find a path to every pupil's heart. Often we lose sight of the fact that other people have obligations to the teacher. Other people here means school heads, all school organisations, and the public. We are duty bound to create an atmosphere distinguished by a rich cultural life, create conditions in which the teacher's energy and precious time will not be spent in vain; that is our first and most important obligation with regard to the teacher.... Teachers must be freed wherever possible from all manner of paper-work and administrative functions. (13, 2)

It is time we understood that the less free time a teacher has, the more he is tied down with all kinds of planning work, reports, meet-

ings, the more his intellectual and emotional life is impoverished, and the earlier will be the onset of that stage of his life when there will be nothing left for him to give to his pupils. Our staff adheres to the following practice: a teacher is never asked to write any reports or bulletins apart from drawing up his plan for educational objectives; he is not called upon to draw up any plans for his day-to-day teaching work, for his individual lessons—that is a practice for the teacher that forms part of his individual creative technique if he feels it necessary—all that is left to him. Only once a week is he required to do additional work (either immediately after hours or in the evenings) at the school (holding a seminar or study circle, etc.). Time—I repeat yet again—is an all-important source of intellectual enrichment for the teacher. (13, 10)

During the whole of the winter holidays no claim of any sort is made on the teachers' time and they can rest as they like. Everything that is organised for the pupils at school during the winter holidays is essentially outdoor recreation and the children can manage by themselves. In May and June we avoid arranging seminars and conferences. Moreover most teachers enjoy one free day without lessons in addition to Sundays. All this ensures that teachers have a necessary quota of free time. (13, 2)

I have dwelt on this subject in such detail for the following reason; on no account—and

of this I am quite convinced—must a teacher feel at the climax of his career after twenty-five or thirty years in school that he has exhausted his physical and mental energy. This is probably one of the most acute questions connected with the huge problem of teaching creativity, the problem concerning the teaching staff in general. . . . A teacher who has 25 or 30 years' experience behind him should feel cheerful and indefatigable. The prospect of going out with his pupils on a hike or spending a night out of doors with them bedded down in a haystack should be a pleasant not a dreaded prospect. (13, 2)

We do not let mothers of small children and mothers-to-be work out in the fields with their pupils. That is not work for women. It should also be noted that correcting exercise books is a tedious task for the teacher. We have a special system of our own for that job. In the junior classes many pieces of work are checked by the children themselves—they exchange exercise books and then correct each other's. Teachers do not then check all the exercise books but select a few at random. The same system is used in all classes. We are adamantly opposed to senior pupils' essays running in to large numbers of pages. Such assignments are unnecessary. The subjects of the essays set are formulated in such a way that they do not require more than two or three pages of exposition; also pupils are encouraged only to present teachers with their own ideas. Cross-check-

ing between pupils is widely practised in the senior classes in mathematics lessons. (13, 2)

The teacher's free time... is the root which nourishes the branches of creative teaching. (13, 2)

In a village context it is difficult to give children wide experience of music. However, we try not to neglect that aspect of intellectual and cultural enrichment either. In the summer many teachers visit Moscow, Leningrad or Kiev. On each occasion the opportunity to hear an opera or a first-class symphony concert is made the most of, however our main window into the world of music is provided by television. (13, 2)

The school trade union organisation and all the teachers make preparations to welcome any new teacher due to arrive.... The village Soviet provides houses not far from the school for all teachers coming to the area from elsewhere. The rent is paid by the school for several months in advance to free the new teacher from worries of that sort at the outset. During the summer holidays before he arrives the house is repaired where necessary and all the rooms and garden are put in order....

In preparation for the new arrival furniture is supplied... and when necessary the teacher is provided with such articles as kitchen utensils and china until he has had time to settle in. The school has the necessary supplies of these articles specially set aside for young teachers.

Sooner or later the young teacher will purchase his own and then the school property will be put back in store by the bursar.

Presents are made ready for the young teacher: a set of textbooks on the subject he will be teaching, a small selection of books on teaching and novels. A newspaper subscription is taken out in his name. All this the teacher will find waiting for him in his new house. This preparation is not a difficult task, what is essential is that interest should be shown in the person concerned, and that teachers, school-children and the local people should join forces to welcome him. (2, 32)

The members of the staff never forget that almost all the teachers have children of their own who are pupils at the school. The way in which the teachers' children study and behave determines to a large degree the authority of each individual teacher and the staff as a whole. The staff goes out of its way to ensure that the progress scored by the teachers' children correspond to their potential and that their behaviour be irreproachable. (2, 37)

How many teachers there are who have no enthusiasm left, who are marking time at one and the same spot and simply because they have lost faith in their own potential! For them work often degenerates into nothing better than the performance of a tedious duty . . . . In such cases only involvement in the active life of the pupils in their work and interests can rescue a



teacher from a state of indifference and apathy, can kindle again his lost faith in his own ability and allow him once more to experience the thrilling joy of success in his work of instruction. (2, 71)

To head a school is first and foremost an educational assignment and last of all an administrative one. (13, 9)

### III

## WORK

### **Love of Work Is Essential for the Development of Our Characters and Intellectual Ability**

Education through work is, so to speak, a combination of three ideas: *ought, hard, and wonderful*. Perhaps there would be no need to bring up the subject of education through work if in schools and homes these three ideas were seen as compatible . . . . But there can be no education outside work and without work, because without work in all its complexity and diversity no one can be educated. (31)

Let us dwell for a moment on the following position. In our country tens of millions of people between the ages of seven and 17 or 18 are studying at school. This is a phenomenon unprecedented in history. It is a great boon of socialism. Yet this boon has given rise to problems of their own which can only be solved if they are approached wisely and intelligently. Our society is obliged to school all citizens between the ages of seven and 17 without exception (and furthermore, several more millions of young people aged between 18 and 25 are receiving higher education) because without universal education and literacy and culture it

is impossible to fashion workers with all-round training and fully developed personalities.

But why do many young people show such little respect for this boon? . . .

Before the Revolution it was the urge to escape poverty which led boys and girls to study. Now that all-powerful "educatory" poverty is no longer with us. And so much the better. But the fact that there are millions of seventeen-year-olds in school means that this achievement, unprecedented in history, should be given massive moral support. The moral factor which could ensure that universal secondary education proceed smoothly and fruitfully and could prevent various disasters which beset school life today is above all education through non-academic work. (31)

We considered, for instance, that if a school-child carries out his work assignments enthusiastically while at school, then his attitude to work after school will be equally enthusiastic. However, experience showed that there was far more to it than that. A pupil may well conscientiously carry out what is expected from him in school and acquire practical skills, but still not be morally prepared for life after school.

This is where the problem of how to foster moral fibre and maturity arises. What should be done to ensure that pupils are morally prepared for their working life? . . . (2, 141)

If a child receives instruction for ten years and is given basic knowledge in the sciences,

only to be handed a spade on leaving school and told to get on and work with it, this will be a real tragedy for him. Yet just such tragedies do befall many school-leavers, whose emotions, ideas and interests have over a period of ten years been quite divorced from real life, from work. Preparation for everyday work must be provided in all pupils' activities and most important of all by way of their minds, ideas and emotional lives. (3, 86)

An individual's attitude to work is an essential element of his character and mental activity. It would be naïve and inadequate to say that interest in work is fostered in the process of work. Interest in work as a central feature of man's nature is fostered by his intellectual and emotional life as well. It is impossible for an individual who thinks or experiences little to take interest in his work. The more intelligent an individual, the richer his emotions and the stronger his will, the more strikingly his inclination for diverse types of work activity will manifest itself . . . . While interest in work cannot be fostered by mere words about work, neither can it be fostered without intelligent, serious words. (3, 14)

Some critics of the curricula and syllabuses for secondary schools see their deficiencies to lie in the fact that they are overloaded with humanities at the expense of natural sciences. Demands are made to curtail humanities in the syllabuses and thus enhance young people's

grounding for practical activity, and to narrow the gulf between instruction and real life. If this criticism were taken to its logical conclusion, it would emerge that the study of humanities bore no relation to the encouragement of interest in work. This is an extremely primitive approach to the problem. Training for life and work activity does not only involve the mastering of a narrow range of skills . . . . Humanities must provide an important instrument for the formation and channelling of pupils' intellectual experience and for helping them to grasp the meaning of their work. (3, 91)

We cannot accept the superficial view on the education process to the effect that hard physical work, coping with privations and obstacles automatically strengthen pupils' moral fibre and principles. The educational role of work depends upon the way in which it influences the individual's ideas, attitudes and emotions, and how closely it bears upon his will-power. (6, 27)

A lack of intelligent work, and indiscriminate assignment to a pupil of any physical work—merely to give him something to keep himself occupied with—are equally disastrous for pupils' intellectual development. (14, 8)

A superficial approach to study is the most terrible deficiency of all education work . . . . The passing of time at classes corrupts pupils and fosters bad habits precisely at an age when young people are most susceptible. There are

countless examples to hand of pupils who, after leaving school, found themselves ill-prepared for life outside, after they had idled their time away in class. Neither exhortations nor useful work and duties can undo the bad habits that have already taken root, after years of time wasted by pupils who sat in class doing nothing. Perhaps they may even start showing interest in work, because the latter is carried out relatively seldom and thus introduces some variety into the boring life of the idler. (3, 120)

Work used to exert a purpose-orientated influence on the individual is particularly closely bound up through numerous dependences and connecting links with other educational influences and if this bond does not materialise then work becomes no more than a repellent obligation of no benefit to man's mind or heart. (10, 224)

Education through work should not be seen as the application of unconnected methods and organisational forms. I have read a good number of articles, whose authors hold that if a village school has a production brigade, and a town school a workshop then the question of education through work can be regarded as solved. Of course both the brigade and the workshop are very important, but they are only isolated facets of education through work. Education through work is an extraordinarily broad, many-faceted concept. Many years of teaching and the hundreds of children's lives

that have passed before me have convinced me that education through work constitutes the very meaning, the principal motive of school and family life. (31)

Work and education through work are not something on a par with study, moral education and development. Work is something all-pervading and all-embracing. To whatever stratagems we might resort in school to involve a child (and later youth) in other work, apart from study, study will still occupy the main place in his mental activity and there is no avoiding that truth. This is the reality which education through work must start out from. Indeed it is the beginning of all beginnings. Food for thought, a path to discovery of the world around us, and life's truths, the acquisition of knowledge and the development of individual views and convictions on the basis of that knowledge are all a schoolchild's sphere of work. (31)

The pupils' brainwork consists in *energetic* mental activity orientated towards correct, scientific cognition of reality. It is energetic because without that quality study ceases to resemble work and degenerates into senseless, merely passive assimilation of knowledge which is a burden to the child.

*Brainwork* does not mean simply "thinking". Thinking only acquires the nature of work if it is purposeful, when a person is striving to achieve a specific goal. (3, 72)

Study becomes work only if it possesses the essential characteristics of any work—an objective, effort and results. (3, 194)

Rigid divisions between physical work and brainwork at school are just as dangerous as dogmatic uncreative instruction. The combination of brainwork with physical work does not mean a mechanical increase of physical effort required together with an increase in the quota of brainwork, but a constant application of intellectual effort in the context of physical work. (3, 71)

A correct conception of brainwork makes it possible to avoid false ideas concerning the division of labour between “clean” work and “dirty” work. After appreciating from personal experience the effort required for real brainwork, the pupil will come to respect physical work as well. (3, 110)

### **Joy from Work which Enhances Everyday Life**

Love of work is above all a facet of children's emotional life. A child is eager to work when work brings him joy. The deeper the joy derived from work, the more children will set store by their honour and appreciate their effort and their reputation involved in that activity. Joy derived from work can play a powerful educational role, helping a child to feel himself



a member of a collective. This does not mean that work is reduced to mere entertainment. It demands concentration and perseverance. But we should not forget that we are working with children who are only just beginning to discover the world. (10, 209)

The joy derived from work cannot be compared with any other forms of joy. It is unthinkable without appreciation of beauty, but here beauty lies not only in what a child perceives, but also in what he creates. Joy in work enhances everyday life; as he learns to appreciate that beauty a child experiences a sense of dignity and pride in the knowledge that difficulties have been overcome. (10, 210)

A sense of joy is only accessible to those who are able to exert themselves and who know what sweat and tiredness are. Childhood should not be just one long holiday; if children are not called upon to exert themselves in any kind of work within their capacity, then the happiness to be derived from work will remain outside their experience. The ultimate value to be derived from education through work consists in the fact that it firmly implants in the child's heart and mind the appreciation of work for the people. Work for the people is not only essential to our daily lives without which our very existence would be impossible, but it also provides scope for the manifestation of various aspects of our nature, pursuits and aspirations. In work a rich diversity of human relationships

unfolds. It is impossible to foster love for work if a child is not aware of the rich beauty of such relationships. People see their work activity as a vital means of self-expression and self-assertion. Without work man is an empty cipher, runs the popular belief. An important task of those engaged in education is to ensure that every pupil's sense of his own dignity and self-respect be based on success in work. (10, 210)

While an important stimulus for older pupils ... is provided by moral consciousness, ... the creative aspect of actual work processes is the main stimulus for younger pupils, indeed sometimes the only stimulus leading them to complete work assignments of considerable duration. In creative work children find those elements which appeal to them in fairy-tales and play: vivid manifestation of man's most striking intellectual and emotional qualities. (6, 85)

It is wrong to expect that from a child's first steps in work activity he will find it attractive and enjoy it. On the contrary, at the outset a child experiences disillusionment in *real work* long before he grows tired. Real love of work eventually stems from a child's appreciation of the creative role of his efforts, and the social significance of his work. Without this realisation any coercion meets with resistance on the part of pupils, which grows as the measure of coercion increases.

Children will always be children and it is interesting activity which brings them satisfaction beyond all else. Certain teachers hold that interest cannot be a reliable stimulus for work activity and here more precise definition is required. We must distinguish between what arouses interest in children—activity for which they show inclination or the desired result of the activity. There are interesting occupations which for all intents and purposes do not involve work. If all children's effort and energy were only expended on interesting occupations of that kind this would soon undermine their strength of character. Sometimes things are taken to funny, indeed ridiculous extremes: an attempt is made to select an "interesting occupation" for an inveterate idler that is destined to absorb him and cure him of all his shortcomings. Experience shows that idlers always surface in situations where there are interesting pastimes to be found but no interesting work.

In what should the interest of work consist for children? Work in itself does not represent any interest for children; indeed it is impossible to imagine that children setting out for a game of volley-ball on seeing flowerbeds that have yet to be dug and spades lying nearby would forget about their volley-ball. Such things do not happen. Yet while playing volley-ball children expend considerably more energy, than they would have done digging over a small flower-bed. Play, however, brings them satisfaction and digging over flower-beds in itself is not a source of satisfaction. Interest

in work and a sense of satisfaction derived from work are acquired and evolve. For children interest in work should consist in appreciation of the fact that they can make an impact on Nature; force a plant to give a bigger yield, or an instrument to lend wood or metal a desired shape. The deeper a child's awareness of his strength and power over things, the more persevering and tenacious he will be in surmounting difficulties, and the more interesting simple, everyday work tasks will be. It is for the sake of this kind of interest that work sessions are made a part of the pupils' intellectual and emotional experience. (3, 16)

A wide diversity of motives account for the attraction of work. These include a foretaste of the pleasure derived from the implementation of a plan, the expectation of a tangible material result, the awareness of a duty discharged vis-à-vis the collective, and a sense of responsibility for the performance of *essential* work, and finally the desire to introduce something new to work activity, to the work process. Making the most of all these motives, we, in our school practice, strove to ensure that the most powerful of all was the idea. Without that underlying idea there could be no question of active effort. In this connection it should be borne in mind that the less experience of life a child has and the less his physical strength the more childlike that idea should be, based on play. The result of work must be as substantial, obvious and tangible as possible. (3, 17)

Love of work is a moral quality that can only be fostered within the collective. The more powerful the collective's respect for work, the more effective the character moulding of each schoolchild. (3, 18)

The social significance of productive work also depends upon the degree to which the work in question is completed and carried through. There are schools in which pupils have a rather big amount of assignments to do, but where the educational value of that work is considerably lower than it need be, because work projects are not carried through to completion. The schoolchildren come to take part in such work when they feel that there are not enough hands, when they "help out in a crisis"... Work is as essential to the individual as food, it must be regular and systematic. The body of staff at the Pavlysh school goes out its way to ensure that the children there not only engage in work projects during their years at school but sees to it that they complete the various work projects they begin and go through all stages of the work process—from appreciation of the ultimate objective ... to profound satisfaction gleaned from its results. (3, 19)

If a pupil embarks on a lengthy work activity, and if after daily stints at it he achieves definite results, then the time will come when he will take an interest in work not thanks to the encouragement of the teacher, but of an inner

incentive. Such is the inevitable consequence of long work activity directed towards the achievement of a specific objective. An inner incentive to work is a powerful force making for self-discipline which is only cultivated in the process of carrying out a long-term work assignment. (3, 20)

We plan our educational process over a long period so that every pupil, as a member of his work collective, should carry out a complex, responsible piece of work from start to finish.

Every effort should be made to avoid haphazard, random work of an "emergency" nature, and that is an indisputable rule in educational trying to foster interest in work. (3, 21)

The more the pupil is aware of the noble aims of work, the less he needs supervision and the more strikingly his own conscience provides his stimulus for work. (6, 99)

It is very difficult to compel pupils to exert themselves mentally, but to compel them to engage in physical work is significantly easier. A combination of manual and brain work is an all-important means of fostering love of work in the laziest and most neglected of pupils, whom parents have never made work. Pupils of this type we first of all make carry out a certain amount of physical work, gradually making sure that they started to see in that work a path to an enhanced understanding and mastering of the forces of Nature—albeit on a

small scale at first. If a man starts to regard physical work as a way to achieving social and intellectual objectives, then this means he has already overcome his laziness and the chance to foster diligence is at hand. (11, 358)

We are deeply convinced of work's ennobling influence. If a child has put even the tiniest part of his heart into work for the sake of other people and found joy for himself in that work, he can no longer become a bitter, self-centred individual. I take the most difficult and "incorrigible" of children by the hand, lead them to the school vineyard and say: "Let's start working here together, with the whole collective." As we work away together, however "hopeless" a case he might have seemed, a willingness to work emerges. The real difficulty consists not in the fact that the child in himself is a difficult case, but that he needs a good deal of taking by the hand and helping to find his bearings in life's complexities and warning in face of misguided steps. Yet to achieve all this it is essential to encourage interest in work. The day will come when the difficult and "incorrigible" pupil passes on the fruits of his labour to other people and experiences joy in doing so. From that moment on he is a "man worth his salt". (9, 76)

We aim to have all pupils both small children and teenagers working for as long as possible in the company of an adult for whom work is a source of happiness and delight.

Shared experience of joy in work is the basic ingredient of self-education. He who has experienced this feeling keenly in childhood and as a teenager will aspire to respect in the eyes of society. Self-education in this way becomes an active form of participation in the cultural and moral life of society. (8, 14)

Guidance of a teacher during work sessions means that a child is aware of a sense of inspiration and absorption in work at his side. If a teacher's work represents a model for a child and impresses him, then the teacher will win his affection. Experience shows that there is no indifference or apathy in the world so strong that it can hold out against the creative inspiration of a teacher or older pupil passionately absorbed in his work. If we notice that a child is indifferent to everything, that nothing interests him, we begin to discuss who among the teachers or older pupils should be brought together with that difficult child. That is where an individual approach to a child starts. Every teacher, school head or director of studies has his handful of problem children who come from difficult homes, where they know no parental love and affection. We find a way into the hearts of those children first and foremost because we are their friends in shared work; one and the same plans, goals and projects concern us all. (11, 354)

Children are always profoundly and powerfully influenced by the fact that some kind of



work engrosses them and their teachers to an equal degree. In work of this kind children open up their hearts and they become their teachers' friends and comrades. Our primary-class teachers plant flowers in little greenhouses with the children during the first autumn of their school career. In the spring we teachers, together with the children, plant out the flowers, tend them, plant trees and take delight in their beauty. Children are always profoundly impressed by the fact that teachers know how to graft fruit trees on to wildings, transplant tree and arrange attractive flowerbeds. Instruction in practical skills at this stage takes the form of joint work shared by pupil and teacher. We work with the children not only out in the garden, but also in the workshops and workrooms and join in their model-building and mechanics sessions. Work sessions shared with children are some of the happiest times in our teaching experience. (11, 367)

However well academic work be organised there is always a certain element of monotony in it. Possible negative consequences of this can be avoided if pupils are confronted with a long-term interesting goal. . . . For this some definite stage, quite clear to the pupils, must be picked out in the work programme. One of the factors which give rise to indifference and rejection of study is that the latter is seen as a tedious activity to which there is no end. This attitude to academic work is particularly dangerous in middle and senior classes. Pupils in middle and

senior classes must be presented with a work goal in their study of specific subjects or subject matter. Without these definite horizons pupils risk turning into mere automatons carrying out homework "from such and such a page to such and such a page". (3, 145, 147)

Pupils are interested by work which opens up to them opportunities for constant progress and advance. Attempts to base production work on simple routine work operations mastered at the first stage of production courses leads to disappointment and later pupils' indifferent attitudes to eventual trades and professions. (3, 372)

Only productive labour, which successfully combines individual and social interests, can be an effective factor in education. If the *only* aim of work is to carry out the largest possible amount of work (which more often than not does not demand serious knowledge, skills and experience), then its educational influence will be insignificant. This can hold back the development of a child's natural inclinations, reduce interest in the results of work carried out and produce indifference in relation to the quality of work carried out. (3, 329)

The following sentiments are also voiced: "Load him up with work, so that he will not have too much time on his hands and then there will be no problems during adolescence." This represents a primitive, oversimplified and

harmful view of activity and also man's intellectual life in general. Firstly, the unintelligent "loading" of work on a pupil may result in "overloading" which is extremely harmful for a young boy's or girl's growing body. Secondly, physical work does not play a decisive role in man's intellectual and emotional life, particularly that of a personality in the making, at its formative stage, if that work is not a means of forging the individual's strength of character. Furthermore, if physical work devours all the individual's time and energy his intellectual and emotional life will be robbed of resources and prospects for future development.... A one-sided understanding of man's practical activity sometimes leads to a situation in which pupils between the ages of 12-16 develop a disdainful attitude to work. If this activity has a rich ideological foundation and gives them a sense of a full, rich life then youngsters are able to carry out considerably more physical work than they would normally do. (6, 88)

Work to encourage a sense of discipline should be based on *work discipline*.... Work in a collective is man's natural condition and this condition alone helps to promote discipline. Yet work does not promote discipline in that it leaves no room for idleness, but rather through its very essence. A lack of discipline is not measured in pranks and minor infringements of rules of behaviour, but first and foremost in the failure of the child to carry out his study obligations, in his careless attitude to socially use-

ful productive work, and in choosing to shift his own share of work on to others. These qualities emerge when involvement in work follows several years of idleness. (3, 426)

Fear of work arises in cases when conditions in the environment contradict the requirements made on the pupil: when one thing is being said and something else practised, when there is talk of creative physical and brain work, while outside the school walls the laws of agrotechnology are being flaunted and attempts are being made to compensate for the low level of production techniques with excessive physical effort. Young people in general react very strongly to any discrepancy between words and action, and discrepancies connected with questions of work are particularly harmful. . . . (3, 119)

Two types of work are involved when it comes to work activity organised for the younger generation—paid and unpaid. When deciding on the correlation between these two types of work we based our approach on the profound changes that are currently at work within our society. The working people are receiving more and more material and non-material advantages from social consumption funds regardless of their own particular work. The share of such boons in the life of children is incomparably greater than it is in the life of adults and this places a great responsibility on us teachers. Pupils must understand the value of work that goes into that which they receive

from society for nothing. To this end we bring them to participate in unremunerated work for society. The more the younger generation receives from society without paying for it with their own effort, the more important their unpaid labour. (11, 322)

The higher the level of material well-being of children at the present stage of social development, the more important their participation in unpaid labour for society. . . . Pupils set up collective funds with which they purchase not only articles for their cultural needs and recreation, but also machines, tools for use in the workrooms and workshops, electric motors for working models, batteries for wireless sets, motor cycles and sewing machines. (8, 135)

Communist labour—labour according to ability—cannot be defined in terms of individual norms. We must start preparing our pupils even now for work without specified norms. By making every pupil understand the need to give his utmost to society, we are establishing new, communist relationships within the collectives. (7, 24)

### **From Technical ABC's to Advanced Working Skills**

The first thing that a child notices when he joins Class 1 is the interesting tasks that everyone is absorbed in. Each pupil has a little cor-

ner for his favourite work, his favourite occupation and he has an older workmate whose work he emulates. The vast majority of the pupils are not only learning something and mastering some skill or other, but they are also passing on their new found abilities and skills and knowledge to their fellow-pupils. Real character formation is achieved only when an individual imparts his knowledge, experience and skills to another. (11, 347)

The starting-point for the development of children's abilities and gifts is literally their fingers. Figuratively speaking tiny streams flow forth from their fingers which feed the source of their creative thought. The more confidence and inventiveness there is in the movement of a child's hands, the more intricate the interaction of his hands with his work tools, and the more complex the movements essential for that interaction, the more vivid will be the creative element in a child's mind and the more subtle, precise and complex the movements used for that interaction; the more profoundly the interaction of a child's hands with Nature and with social work has become a part of the child's emotional and intellectual life, the more observant, inquisitive, astute, attentive a child will be in his activity and the more his urge to investigate the world around him will grow.

In other words, the more skill mastered by a child's hand, the more intelligent the child. But skills are not achieved thanks to mere intuition.

They are determined by a child's mental and physical ability. A child's mental ability is consolidated as his skills are perfected, but at the same time a child's physical skills flow forth from his mental ability. I always strove to ensure that a child's apprehension of the world around him involved active interaction of his hands with that environment . . . that a child manifested and developed his curiosity not only by means of questions but also through work. (10, 220)

However complex machines and technological processes become, manual work will never cease to be a vital element of production. The concept "manual work" is not a synonym for "physical work". In high-level manual work creative thought is required. The more complex technology and work processes, the more elementary skills and experience of manual work will be required before technical processes can be mastered. As production is increasingly automated the role of skills and experience necessary for the regulation, adjustment, tuning, assembly, inspection and up-dating of equipment will grow.

Thanks to the high level of manual labour the skills for operating complex machinery and devices are more sophisticated and require greater expertness than ever before. Men and women who have long experience of manual work are able to operate machines in such a way that their units and parts interact smoothly without any hitches. (11, 360)

Regardless of how far technology develops and the level which technical inventions reach, the path to the summits of scientific discovery and the achievement of expertness will always start out from mastery of the technical ABC, that is through the study of the internal combustion engine, the turbine, circular and band-saws, etc. Just as it is impossible to approach the frontiers of science without first mastering the alphabet, so without understanding simple tools, apparatus and mechanisms it is impossible to master complex technology and achieve competent, skilled levels of work. (11, 325)

In primary classes children begin to learn to use tools. We attach great importance to children's tools for manual work. Pupils in the middle classes at work sessions in the locksmith's workshop make knives and cutters for wood-carving and for cutting out paper and cardboard. There is special device with which the youngsters make small clay bricks for the construction of toy buildings. Small chisels and gouges, axes and hammers are all used by the small children in their work sessions. As they learn to work with various materials the children gradually progress to making things, in which the quality of the whole depends upon the quality of the parts and their interaction. Precise calculation and the precision with which materials are prepared and assembled, accurate interaction of the parts concerned—all these work skills fostered and nurtured in primary



school are very important for subsequent instruction at work sessions. (11, 323)

The material basis of a school truly improves if the work the children engage in brings certain profit. Harvests from the school garden, orchard and vineyard and the tending of fruit-tree saplings all represent important material assets. Some of these we pass on to the local collective farm and parents free of charge, but some we sell: the resultant revenue is spent on cultural functions and facilities provided for the children (excursions, the purchase of musical instruments and books) and also for further expansion of the school's material basis; with this money the school bought electric motors, materials for the radio club, and internal combustion engines. The pupils work not merely so as to learn how to work, but also so as to create material conditions for more complex, intellectually demanding work. Money obtained in this way has also been used to provide a fund to assist those families in material straits, money from which is distributed by a special committee made up of Komsomol members and the council of the school's Pioneer organisation. (11, 317)

Of course it is important to encourage readiness to carry out all sorts of work conscientiously which are essential for society. Yet this moral quality is in itself the result of education: pupils can become conscientious workers ready to carry out *any necessary* work only

after they have learnt to appreciate the need to carry out the most ordinary types of work, and that can only be achieved after lengthy, purpose-orientated *educational* work. (3, 329)

As they plant out trees for a wind-break or an oak-grove and tend these for several years, or as they go about the daily task of dusting the classroom desks pupils in both cases are carrying out socially useful work which has an important role to play in moulding their characters as well. But while in the first case the pupil is taking a direct part in the creation of society's material technical basis, in the second the work does not extend beyond "self-service"; work of the latter type cannot nurture those emotions and convictions which the former helps take root. At the same time "self-service" does have its advantages: it fosters tidiness, respect for the simple task and those people who engage in modest, inconspicuous jobs. (11, 318)

The more opportunities there are to make use of the things created by the children, the deeper the moral impact and attraction of the work involved. A working model that can be used, once it is complete, in practical work is worked on with much more interest and eagerness than models of a purely decorative type. . . . This is why all pupils take such an interest in making wireless sets. . . . (3, 290)

Schoolchildren do not see the completion of a model as its ultimate goal; but rather its

testing in practice. Children are prepared to work for a whole year for the sake of those thrilling twenty or thirty minutes and overcome all manner of difficulties. Operating a working model provides them with ultimate satisfaction. (3, 295)

Many years ago when considering the work of pupils in planting out and tending trees we came to the conclusion that because that work lacked any set goal it came to be regarded by them either as a means of keeping them occupied or as a futile waste of effort. Children would dig holes, plant trees, water them, destroy pests and it might have appeared to the observer that they were doing very useful work. However, after all this work they would stand calmly by, while a fruit tree withered from lack of water, and sometimes they themselves would damage the trees they had planted.

As far as the effort involved in planting trees does not present any difficulties (if you calculate all the time spent on tending an apple tree from the time of planting to the apple harvest it will work out at less than a minute a day). Serious interest in trees, and respect for the work of gardeners and foresters can only be successfully encouraged when someone has once tended a fruit tree with his own hands.... (3, 256)

It is very important that work for pupils in their early teens made it easier for them later on to acquire new skills and work experience.

We do not let pupils of 15 and 16 learn to drill metal, prepare the soil for sowing wheat or learn to graft fruit trees, for these skills they should master five years earlier and the better they master them at that stage the better their all-round development will be as they enter their late teens. (11, 313)

Thanks to the wide range of work activities that are practised in the school hobby groups our pupils, by the time they enter Class 8, have already mastered a good number of skills and know where their talents and interests lie.... On moving up from Class 8 pupils are already able to process metal with metal-working tools and on metal-working machines, they can do woodwork involving lathes and make things out of wood (such as picture frames, stools, rulers, compasses), assemble models of machines and devices using ready-made components, process metal parts for these models, make tools for working wood and metal and also assemble metal-working machine tools, assemble electrical apparatus and wireless sets, prepare the soil for sowing, sow seed, tend crops, bring in the harvest, tend livestock, drive cars and tractors, graft fruit trees, grow grapes and fruit trees. The mastering of this range of skills is of vital importance for it means that older pupils are able to master complicated skills and techniques later in a short space of time. (11, 337)

In the village of today we no longer see the ploughman and sower of seed who were fami-

liar figures for centuries. The collective-farm workers specialising in plant-growing or live-stock care above all can also expertly operate various agricultural machines. Interest in agricultural work is now impossible without the desire and ability to replace the spade and fork with machinery. All collective-farm workers have to become expert machine operators. This is the main proviso for doing away with the differences between life in town and country. For every 1,000 hectares of cultivated land on the collective farms there should be no more than ten people who know how to operate agricultural machines. Only then will it be possible to achieve a high level of productivity. Yet it will only be possible to achieve that state of affairs when everyone has been introduced to the world of technology at seven or eight, when the introduction of the achievements of science to practical everyday life becomes the distinctive characteristic of the country's intellectual development. (11, 343)

It is wrong that any of our pupils should be faceless, indifferent to work or unable to find anything that "sets him ticking" as the phrase goes. By no means everyone is cut out to be a man of learning, writer or actor; not everyone is destined to discover gunpowder, yet it is within everyone's reach to become a poet or artist in his work and this is an essential condition for the individual's all-round development. We must avoid at all costs that people simply work "any old how".

The individual, who has no favourite occupation, will glean no joy from any cultural riches and treasures. (9, 117)

We try to ensure that all pupils achieve considerable success in their favourite hobby or activity. This path to ultimate success usually involves long searchings; pupils try their hand at various activities, and master many skills, but if a pupil does not achieve success in one particular field that is above average for his age that means he has not yet found his real bent. Real success is not simply satisfactory, good or even excellent implementation of some assignment that is within anyone's grasp. Every pupil can make an excellent ruler or assemble a model of a generator if he tries—although of course some will need more practice than others. But in order for a pupil to become really absorbed and carried away with some type of activity success is essential which exceeds the highest demands made on all the pupils of that particular age group. This is the success we would refer to as considerable. All pupils of Classes 6 and 7 in our school are good at grafting buds of a cultivated variety of fruit trees on to a wilding and excellent examples of such work not regarded in our school as considerable success. Yet if a pupil in Class 3 or 4 achieved real skill in this work, let alone a pupil from Class 2, then that would rank as considerable success. (11, 354)

Considerable success involves a pupil overtaking his peers. Of course this does not mean

that one or two members of a collective forge ahead of all the rest in a class. Each of them later also have their favourite work activity, in which they have made appreciable if not considerable success. (11, 354)

In education theory and practical education work there are tendencies to attribute decisive importance to the way in which productive work is organised. Often subjects that come up for discussion include: the most expedient way to group pupils together during the summer period on the basis of class units or starting out from the school collective; the nature of relations which should exist between class groups if the latter are not linked together in a single unit, etc. In such discussions the educative role of production work is made directly dependent on the answers given to these questions. The urge artificially to maintain the class collective in the context of production activities is the surest way to isolate the school from real life. Schoolchildren will not always work together with their classmates; they will be joining work teams at factories, collective and state farms, and it is for this which they should be prepared. (3, 330)

The success of education through work is in my view achieved, when children have to be made to leave for home after work sessions. (13, 2)

The development of children's abilities is a vital, dynamic process. In the vast majority of

cases the individual does not turn out as he dreamt of doing while a schoolboy. Nevertheless, precisely the attainment of considerable success constitutes the small "summit" which a child can conquer—provided he makes special effort. Once he has raised himself up that far then he realises how much and at the same time how little he has done, for after all from a small peak the great as yet inaccessible heights are to be seen far more clearly than before. (11, 355)



## IV

### BEAUTY

#### **To the Humane by Way of the Beautiful**

We teach children that man set himself apart from the animal world and became a being endowed with talent not only because he made the first implements of labour with his own hands, but also because he beheld the depth of the blue sky, the sparkling light of the stars, the rosy flush of the sky at dawn and dusk, a crimson sunset heralding a windy day, the boundless vistas of the steppes, a flock of cranes spread across the azure sky, the reflection of the sun in transparent morning dew, grey threads of rain on an overcast autumn day, the frail stem and blue-white bell of the snowdrop; he beheld these things and wondered, and began to create new beauty. We too must stop in our tracks to admire beauty and then beauty will blossom in our hearts.

Man came into his own when he heard the whisper of leaves in the wind, the gentle chirring of grasshopper, the rippling of a spring stream and the peal of silver bells in the lark's song that soars forth into the bottomless abyss of the summer sky, the flutter of snowflakes and the moan of a blizzard outside the window, the

gentle splash of waves and the solemn quiet of night; he hears them and, hardly daring to breathe, listens for hundreds and thousands of years to the miraculous music of life. You too must learn to hear this music, children, and to take delight in beauty. (11, 373)

The beauty of our native country which is revealed to us in fairy-tales, imaginings and creative activities is a source of love for our Homeland. A true understanding and awareness of the greatness and power of our Homeland come to us gradually and their source is beauty. I should like to advise the young teacher in charge of small children that they should be prepared thoughtfully and carefully for the moment when you first start to tell them about the greatness and power of our native land—the Soviet Union. Your words should carry inspiration, noble thoughts (do not fear accusations of being high-flown, if you are filled with pure and lofty emotions at such moments). Yet for that word to make children's hearts beat faster, it is essential that the ground of children's minds be carefully ploughed and planted with seeds of beauty beforehand.

May children always be able to sense beauty and take delight in it, may images which embody their Homeland be ever alive in their hearts and minds; beauty is the flesh and blood of humanity, kindness and sincerity. . . . Smiles, delight and wonder inspired by beauty appeared to me as a path which would surely lead to children's hearts. (10, 30)

There are countries in the world where the fields and meadows are more colourful than those of our countryside, yet for the children in our care it is their native landscape that they should hold most dear. Children should not merely be shown how the trees are covered with a veil of white blossom in spring, how bees hover over the golden bells of the hop-flowers, how ripe apples swell and tomatoes are flushed with red: all this they should experience as joy, as the fullness of life. May they look back on their childhood as a time of bright sunshine: an orchard decked out in white blossom, the inimitable sound of bees' harps over a field of buckwheat, deep cold autumn skies with flocks of cranes on the horizon, dark blue barrows shimmering in a heat haze, a crimson sunset, a willow-tree bowing down low over the mirror of a pond's surface, elegant poplars at the side of a road: may all these things leave an unforgettable imprint on the heart as the beauty of life during the years of childhood, infinitely precious memories.

But this beauty should penetrate a child's heart together with the thought that there would be no such flowering orchard, bees' music, gentle mother's singing, sweet dreams at day-break as mother gently makes sure her child's feet are tucked under the blanket—none of all this, if on one far-away winter morning nineteen-year-old Alexander Matrosov had not covered with his body an enemy machine gun stemming the bullets so as to protect his comrades-in-arms, if Nikolai Gastello had not

steered his burning plane to crash right into enemy tanks, if thousands upon thousands of heroes had not shed their blood from the Volga to the Elbe. This idea we make a point of bringing home to children at precisely those moments when they are experiencing the joy to be derived from the beautiful world around them. I told my pupils of how Soviet soldiers fought for the freedom and independence of their Homeland right here in our native village, in these very fields, beneath these very trees. (10, 225)

We would be sitting on a barrow listening to the tuneful choir of grasshoppers, while the scent of steppe grasses hung in the air. We would be silent. There is no need to say a great deal to children, to stuff them full of stories, words are not mere playthings and overdoses of words are particularly harmful. Children need not only to listen to what their teachers tell them but also to be silent for a while; in his moments of silence a child is thinking and assimilating what he has seen and heard. It is very important that a teacher should not overdo his talking. Children must not be turned into passive word-absorbers. Considerable time and nervous energy is required to think through every vivid image, whether visual or verbal. Knowing how to let children think is one of the subtlest skills demanded of a teacher.

Out in the countryside a child must be given the opportunity to listen, look and feel.... (10, 27)

It is very important that the wondrous world of Nature, play, beauty, music, fantasy, creativity, which surrounds a child until he goes to school, should not be shut off from him by the classroom door. In a child's first months and years of school life study should not become his only form of activity. A child will only come to enjoy school, when teachers open wide the doors to those joys which he knew before.

At the same time study should not be geared to childish pleasures and deliberately made lighter, in order to ensure that children do not get bored. Gradually, little by little a child has to be prepared for the most important undertaking of his whole life—for serious, persistent, tenacious work, which is impossible without concentrated thought. (10, 95)

The first lessons in thinking should not take place inside the classroom, but out of doors.... Really active creative thinking is always characterised by excitement; if a child has once caught the fascination of words, his heart will be filled with a wave of inspiration. Take your charges out into the fields or a park, drink from Nature, the source of ideas, and that life-giving water will make of your pupils wise explorers, inquisitive boys and girls eager for knowledge, indeed regular poets. Time and time again I have been forced to admit that a child's all-out mental development is impossible without that element of poetic, emotional, aesthetic inspiration. The very nature of a child's thought processes demands poetic creativity.

Beauty and dynamic thought are as inextricably bound up with each other as the sun and flowers. Poetic creativity starts out from seeing and understanding beauty. The beauty of Nature sharpens perception, stimulates creative thought and lends words the vitality of personal experience. (10, 39)

We devote considerable time to providing children with a wide range of aesthetic impressions; indeed that is the starting point of our efforts to give them an aesthetic environment. Everything a child sees, once he has crossed the threshold of our school, and everything he encounters is beautiful. The general view of the school is beautiful, as it stands hidden in a sea of greenery; so are the green vines with their amber grapes, and the climbing roses along the path from one building to the next. The trees in the school garden are beautiful at any season of the year. The porch of the school's main entrance framed in wild vines is also beautiful. . . . (11, 389)

In our school four buildings are used for classwork and near each building there is a green lawn; there is not a single patch of land without greenery; this is not merely important with regard to maintenance of sanitary conditions but a canon of aesthetics as well. (9, 174)

The aesthetic quality of this environment is achieved thanks to the harmony of the wild and the man-made, which cannot but evoke a

sense of joy. We try to make sure that in the school garden the children should always behold the beauty of Nature, which produces as still greater impact because they have helped to make their surroundings beautiful through their own work.

The harmony inherent in the things around a child makes his surroundings aesthetic provided that individual things in that environment do not call too much attention to themselves, are not too conspicuous. If, for example, one were to place several large pots of flowers on the sill of a window that opened on to an orchard, the overall harmony would be destroyed, for the flowers would overshadow the aesthetic qualities of other things, the orchard for a start. If, on the other hand, a vase containing a single twig echoing the shape of the trees in the orchard and the same season (harmony can also involve contrasting impressions) then the twig, the orchard and the vistas of the distant fields would produce quite a different impact. (11, 389)

It is very easy to persuade a child aged between 7 and 11 struck by the beauty of Nature or his surroundings to take part in active work. . . . Children enjoy work, which involves the creation of something beautiful or unusual. This natural inclination of a child . . . should be developed in whatever way possible. We organise our teaching in such a way that the work activities of the youngest pupils should also be aesthetic activity (fret work, poker work, nee-

dle work, laying out flower-beds, tending flowers and trees, etc.). Work which involves aesthetic stimulation and experience gradually develops and consolidates a child's awareness of the beauty inherent in work activities and stimulates aspiration after not only highly productive work but also beautifully executed work. (6, 71)

When gardens come into flower this is truly a special occasion for children. Early in the morning we go out into the school garden and admire the trees girt with white, pink or orange blossoms and listen to the bees humming. We explain to the children that at that time of year it is a great pity to linger in bed, for they might sleep through all that beauty! The children often get up before sunrise anxious not to lose those moments when the first rays of sun light up the flowers covered in dewdrops. In breathless wonder the children admire the beauty that confronts them. Children may well not pay heed to that beauty if it is not pointed out to them and if they are not told about it. (11, 376)

It is difficult to wake a small child at dawn and lead him out of doors, to take him out into the fields—his slumbers are so sweet. Yet if you help him do this the first time and open his eyes to the beauty of daybreak, let him listen to the music of the new day and then he will no longer be lazy about getting up so early. He will rise to go out and admire the beauties of Nature and will not regret afterwards as the



years go by that he did not oversleep and saw all those beauties. . . . (9, 173)

Those early morning outings later developed into the school's Flower Festivals. There were several each year. The spring flower festival was the festival of lilies-of-the-valley, tulips and lilac. On that day we all went to the woods and the lilac garden which had been planted the first autumn after the school was opened. Each pupil picked a small bouquet, trying to achieve an inimitable range of colours. Then everyone came out on to the lawn and admired the bouquets. The children would then take them to their mothers and friends. The children in the nursery class were invited to join the festival and bouquets were picked for them as well.

The second flower festival was the Rose Festival. . . .

The third was that of wild flowers. That was the one the children enjoyed most of all. In the morning we went out into the fields early when the flowers were at their loveliest. Picking beautiful bunches of wild flowers is a real art. Then the children brought back their flowers to the school, had a rest and dreamt how wonderful it would be if all the wild flowers grew in our garden as well. . . .'

The autumn flower festival or Chrysanthemum Festival was a sad farewell to the summer. The pupils went out of their way to see that it was held as late as possible. . . . We shielded the chrysanthemum bushes from cold

winds and frost and covered them up at night with paper hoods. After the autumn festival we took the chrysanthemum plants into the greenhouse.

In their third year at school the pupils took part for the first time in the Snowdrop Festival. At that time there was still snow on the ground in the woods, but the earth was waking from its winter sleep nevertheless. The first mauve-blue and white bells were to be seen in the meadows and on that day the youngsters all took bunches of snowdrops home to their mothers.

It would be unfortunate if readers were to think that my pupils' childhood was one long "picnic". . . . Each of those festivals required a good deal of work.

I made sure that the children should look upon work as a source of aesthetic pleasure. It is important that man should work not merely to obtain food and clothes and a roof over his head, but also so that flowers always bloom beside his house bringing him and others happiness, and that even as children men should learn to work to create happiness. (10, 214)

Probably there is no work that gladdens and ennobles the heart, combining beauty and creativity and humanity, more than the cultivation of roses. I tried to encourage every child at the school to start up his own flower-garden. In Classes 3 and 4 my pupils were already taking delight in roses they had grown in their garden plots at home. (10, 212)

If a child has tended a rose in order to be able to take delight in its beauty and if the only reward for his labour is that delight in beauty, the achievement of that beauty for the happiness and joy of other people—he can be incapable of evil, base behaviour, cynicism or cold indifference. This is one of the most complex questions of moral education. Beauty in itself does not contain any magic power, that might foster noble qualities in man. It nurtures moral purity and humanity only when work which creates beauty is rendered humane by lofty noble motives and above all when inherent in that work there is respect for man. The more profound the humane element in work creating beauty for other people, the more the individual respects himself and the more intolerant he becomes of deviations from moral norms. (10, 213)

That which a man loses in childhood he can never make up for as a youth and still less so in maturity. This rule applies to all spheres of a child's emotional and mental development and particularly his aesthetic education. Sensitivity and receptiveness to beauty is incomparably more profound in childhood than in later periods of personality development. One of the the main tasks facing the teacher in primary school is to foster children's need for the beautiful, which to a large degree determines the whole tone of a child's emotional life, and his relationships within a collective. The need for the beautiful enhances the indivi-

dual's moral stature or beauty, making him reject and refuse to tolerate all that is ugly and trite. (10, 168)

"With a violin in his hands, man is unable to do wrong" goes the old Ukrainian proverb attributed to the remarkable thinker Grigory Skovoroda. Evil and true beauty are incompatible. One of the educator's important tasks is to place that "violin" in every child's hands so that he might feel how music is born. (10, 168)

Aesthetic education can be presented magnificently, but if other elements and components of communist education are seriously deficient, then the educational impact of the beautiful will be diminished and perhaps even lost altogether. Every influence exerted on the emotional world of a child only acquires educational significance, when it comes side by side with other equally important influences. In certain conditions someone can carefully cultivate flowers, take delight in their beauty and at the same time be cynical, indifferent and cold: everything depends on the other factors concomitant with the particular influence we teachers are pinning certain hopes on. (10, 213)

For children and young people it is particularly important to find and sense within oneself beauty of character, and to be able to take delight in the beautiful humane elements within oneself. One of the fundamental patterns of

character development is the path to humanity by way of beauty. (14, 2)

For youth the following maxim is particularly apt: man's apprehension of the beautiful in Nature and art reveals to him the beautiful within himself. (6, 207)

Young people sense beauty and nobility not only in perfection of external form, but also in the creations of human reason (for example, in grandiose technical structures, and in new machines) and particularly in intrinsically moral deeds, ideas and other manifestations of the inner world of men, to whose lives the norms of communist morality are fundamental. (6, 147)

Communist ideas in themselves are a supreme manifestation of the beautiful for young boys and girls on the threshold of adulthood. At that time more than ever before the striving towards the beautiful is bound up with the striving towards what is moral.

This explains young people's uncompromising rejection of all that is immoral. All that is immoral or amoral is seen by young people as vulgar and ugly. (6, 206)

Pupils show interest above all in man within communist society—what he should be like. Their dream of the beautiful centres round man and this is why their aesthetic ideal is linked with a moral ideal. . . . (8, 74)

## **The Fairy-Tale Cannot Exist Without Beauty**

The concept of the fairy-tale looms very large in a child's mind. His heart stands still when he hears or utters the word fairy-tale, which immediately conjures up a wondrous picture. I cannot imagine instruction in school without children having fairy-stories read to them or without them creating their own. (10, 29)

But perhaps fairy-tales make it harder for children to understand the true laws of Nature? No, on the contrary, they help them to do so. Children are well aware that a clod of earth cannot turn into a living being, just as they realise that there are no giants, witches or sorcerers. Yet, if children were denied the world of fairy-tales, if they did not become absorbed in the battle between good and evil and did not sense that man's ideals of truth, honour and beauty are reflected in fairy-tale adventures then their world would be a far more constricting and unfriendly place. (10, 58)

The fairy-tale cannot exist without beauty.... Thanks to fairy-tales children become aware of the world not only through their minds, but with their hearts as well. Not only do they gain knowledge but they also react to events and phenomena in the world around them and are helped to express their attitudes

to good and evil. It is in fairy-tales that children find their first conceptions of justice and injustice. The initial stage of a child's education in ideas also takes place through the fairy-tale. Children at that age grasp ideas only when they are embodied in vivid images. (10, 154)

Fairy-tales provide rich and unique opportunities for fostering children's devotion to their homeland. The patriotic principle in the fairy-tale is rooted deep in the content; fairy-tale heroes created by the people and handed down across the centuries convey to children's hearts and minds the creative spirit of the working people, its outlook on life, its ideals and its aspirations. Fairy-tales foster children's love for their native earth for no other reason than that they are the people's creation. When we behold the miraculous frescoes in Kiev's Cathedral of St. Sophia we apprehend them as part of the people's history, a creation of its mighty talent and our hearts are filled with a sense of pride in that people's creative spirit, mind and skill. Folk-tales produce a similar impression on the heart of the child. It might appear at first glance that fairy-tales are based on simple "everyday" incidents: an old man and an old woman sowed a turnip ... an old man decided to outwit a wolf, by making an ox of straw ... yet every word in such fairy-tales is a delicate stroke in an immortal fresco, and every word and every character reflects the creative spirit of the people. The fairy-tale is part of the wealth of a people's culture; as

he comes to know these folk-tales so a child reaches an emotional awareness of his own people. (10, 154)

Three months after the "School of Joy" was first set up we installed the Fairy-Tale Room in the school. With the help of older pupils we created a setting in which the small children felt themselves in a fairy-tale world. It required a good deal of work to fill this room with things that would remind children of the fairy-tales that their mothers had told them ever since they could first follow them, in the twilight before they went to bed or by the light of flickering flames. There is a house belonging to the wicked witch, Baba Yaga, standing on chicken-legs and surrounded by high trees and tree stumps, and next to the house stand fairy-tale characters: the Cunning Fox, the Old Grey Wolf, and the Wise Owl. In the opposite corner stands a cottage belonging to the Old Man and the Old Woman with a flock of swan geese flying over the roof, one of them carrying away perched on its wings little Ivasik-Telesik, the hero of a Ukrainian folk-tale. In the third corner is a blue sea and on its shores there stands a dilapidated old hovel belonging to the kind old fisherman and his wicked old wife, . . . while in the sea nearby there swims the Goldfish. In the fourth corner there is a wood in winter complete with snowdrifts, through which trudges a small girl hardly able to make her way through the snow after her stepmother sent her out to



collect berries. A small kid is peeping out of one of the windows. Nearby there is a large mitten in which there lives a mouse, who is visited by unexpected strangers. We also made a large tree stump out of plywood and on this are placed puppets—Little Sister, Grey Rabbit, a bear, a wolf, a kid, a straw ox and Little Red Riding Hood.

All this we made ourselves gradually over a period of time. I would cut out, draw, glue together and the children would help me about my work. I set great store by the aesthetic aspect of this room in which the children would listen to fairy-tales. Each picture, each fairy-tale character was designed to make the children more aware of what was being read to them and the ideas behind the tales. Even the lighting in the room had a part to play. When the tale of the Frog Princess was being read, small lamps would be switched on in our wood in the room which was then filled with a green gloom creating an atmosphere like that in which the events of the story actually unfold. (10, 155)

I take the children into the Fairy-Tale Room only once a week or once a fortnight. Aesthetic needs should never be satisfied to the point of satiety. Satiety is the starting point of superciliousness, blasé disillusionment, boredom, the search for ways to “kill” time. . . . (10, 155)

Each time that we come into the Fairy-Tale Room the children want to start playing. Each

one of them—boys and girls alike—have a favourite puppet or toy. These games always take the form of creative activities: the children pretend to be fairy-tale characters and the puppets they wield help them to express their ideas and emotions. (10, 156)

I was not distressed by the fact that the small girls and boys enjoyed playing with the puppets for several years. There is nothing “babyish” about that, as some teachers believe; dolls and puppets are just another form of fairy-tale, they give life to the characters they represent, that same life which permeates the creative process of composing and listening to fairy-stories. Puppets provide animated images of the characters the children want . . . to bring alive. Every child is anxious to have something infinitely dear and precious to him. I have made a careful study of the emotional relationships which grow up between children and their favourite puppets. (10, 156)

Making up fairy-stories is one of the most interesting forms of poetic creativity for children. At the same time it provides an important means of furthering their mental development. If teachers are keen for children to create and invent fictitious characters, then they must impart at least a spark of their own creativity to the child’s mind. If you yourself are unable to create or you regard adapting to the world of children’s interests as a futile pastime then nothing will come of it. (10, 158)

Children's feats of imagination in the Fairy-Tale Room know no bounds. As soon as a child has looked at some new object which in his mind he already associates with some other one, then a picture is conjured up in his mind, his childish imagination comes into play, his thoughts throb with excitement, his eyes sparkle and the words pour forth smoothly. In view of this I made sure there was a wide range of different objects round the room, between which the children could find some real or imaginary link. I did my best so that the children could give play to their fancy and invention, that they compose new stories. Next to the heron standing on one leg there was a small frightened kitten and the children soon started thinking up interesting stories about Heron and Kitty. Then next to a small boat with a single oar in it crouched a frog simply asking its way into a story. We also had a cave with a bear cub peeping out of it, a mosquito and a fly (vastly out of proportion in relation to the bear cub but then in fairy-tales such details can be overlooked), a small piglet next to a basin and soap and all these objects did not simply make the children smile, but stirred their imagination.

If I was able to bring a child with serious problems in his mental development to the point where he made up a fairy-story and linked together in his mind several objects in his immediate surroundings then I could say with confidence that the child had learnt to think. (10, 157)

I have taken down various stories made up by children at twilight. These stories are dear to me as bright sparks of thought which I succeeded in kindling in my pupils' minds. If it was not for this invention and creative activity, for this composition of fairy-stories many children's speech would be jerky and confused, and their sequences of ideas chaotic. I have come to realise that there is a direct interdependence between children's aesthetic sense and the wealth of their vocabulary and speech patterns. Their aesthetic sense lends emotional colour to what they say. The more interesting the fairy-tale and the more unusual the setting in which the children find themselves, the more active the play of a child's imagination and the more unexpected the characters conjured up by the young inventors. At twilight my pupils would invent fairy-tales by the dozen, which were then written down in a manuscript anthology entitled *Twilight Tales*. (10, 159)

The subject of creativity is still unexplored territory for educationists and in order to master it detailed investigation has to be carried out on the subject of the educational significance of creativity. (12, 315)

Why does the adolescent's "toothache of the heart" (Heine) take the form of indifference, and cooling enthusiasm in relation to studies, or quite simply an unwillingness to study? One of the main reasons for this phenomenon is a lack of, or an insufficient, creative

element in their emotional and intellectual life. Those stimuli that were sufficient for young schoolchildren are scant fare for the adolescent; for him to carry out the wishes and behests of an adult he respects and likes, praise and encouragement are not enough. He needs to express himself, and not only through the results of his studies but also in his own inner world. He is no longer willing to be a passive consumer of cultural riches and values. He feels the need to create. Creative inspiration through work that produces cultural values is a vital condition for a full intellectual and emotional life. (12, 316)

I have come to believe in the existence of one very important, as far as I am concerned, pattern underlying education practice, ignorance of which complicates the problems involved in educating adolescents. In Classes 5 and 6 pupils are overwhelmed with a regular avalanche of knowledge, ten times more than ever confronted them in the primary classes; the wider the range of knowledge a pupil has to assimilate the more intellectual effort he has to make and the more importance must be attached to individual, particularised work to nurture the pupil's emotions, otherwise cold rationality will gain the upper hand. This special work for moulding character should involve reading, dramatising, telling, listening, and taking to heart fairy-tales. It should not come to a halt once a pupil gets as far as Class 5 or 6. (14, 6)

## Music Keeps the Heart Straight

For the child with a sensitive emotional nature the world around him sharpens his capacity for emotional involvement and experience. Children endowed with such natures are unable to be indifferent to the grief, suffering, or misfortunes of others; their conscience obliges them to come to the help of their fellow-men. This sensitivity can be fostered by music and song.

The quality of emotionality which characterises the child with a well-developed sense of morals and aesthetic taste is reflected in the fact that the child's heart is highly responsive to kind words, exhortations or advice. To put it another way, if you are anxious for words to *teach children how to live* and for your charges to aspire after good then foster the sensitivity and emotional responsiveness in young hearts. One of the numerous means of influencing them is music. *Music and morality*: the relationship between these is a subject requiring profound investigation and study. (10, 165)

The quality of the education work carried on in a school is to a large extent determined by the degree to which school life is permeated with musical activity. Just as gymnastics keeps a child's body straight so music keeps a child's heart straight. (14, 6)

Music is a most miraculous and subtle means for conveying the appeal of what is good, beau-

tiful and humane. Man attains knowledge of himself as he listens to music, he realises that he, man, is a splendid creation born to be splendid and that if there is wrong within him, it must be vanquished; music helps him to an awareness of wrong within him. (14, 6)

Music enhances man's awareness of what is noble, splendid and beautiful not only in his environment but also within himself. Music is a powerful instrument of self-education.

Many years spent observing the intellectual and emotional development of one set of pupils from their early years and right through school convinced me that the overwhelming unorganised impact on children of cinema, radio and television do not further but rather undermine correct aesthetic education. Particularly detrimental in this respect is an abundance of haphazard musical impressions. It seemed to me that one of the most important tasks involved in educating children was to make sure that their exposure to musical works should be alternated with exposure to that environment in which man is best able to understand and sense the beauty of music—namely the quiet peace of fields and meadows, the rustle of leaves, the song of the lark in the blue sky, the whisper of a corn-field rippling in the wind, the buzzing of bees. All this and more make up the music of Nature, that source from which man gleans his inspiration when creating musical melodies.

Vitally important in aesthetic education as a whole and musical education in particular are the psychological principles which the teacher takes as his guide as he strives to introduce children to the world of the beautiful. For me the most important principle was education of the *ability* to respond emotionally to beauty, and the *need* for impressions of an aesthetic character. I regarded as an important goal of the whole system of education teaching man to live in the world of the beautiful, so that he becomes unable to live without beauty, so that the beauty of the world created beauty within him.

In the "School of Joy" particular attention was paid to listening to music—works of music and the music of Nature. The first task which this involved was stimulating emotional response to melody and then gradually convincing children that the beauty of music is rooted in the beauty of the surrounding world. Musical tunes should be used to compel us to stop in our tracks and listen to the music of Nature, to delight in the beauty of the world, to protect that beauty and multiply it. Long years of experience have shown me that man attains command of his native speech and the fundamentals of musical culture—the ability to apprehend, understand, feel, experience to the full the beauty of melody—only during his childhood.

All that is let slip during childhood, is very hard, almost impossible to make up as an adult. A child's heart is equally responsive to



his native language, to the beauty of Nature and to musical tunes. If a child in his early years is taught to respond emotionally to the beauty of a work of music, if a child is able to sense the many-faceted nuances of emotion in sounds, he raises himself up to a level of cultural experience which is not to be attained by any other means. The awareness of beauty in a musical tune opens up to a child what is beautiful within his own character: the young person becomes aware of his own dignity. Musical education is not education for the musician but first and foremost education of the Man. (10, 52-53)

I would select music for the children to listen to in which the familiar sounds they heard around them were conveyed in striking images: the twittering of birds, the rustle of leaves, the rumble of thunder, the rippling of streams and the howling of the wind. . . . At the same time I would make sure the children were not exposed to an overabundance of impressions. Once again I reiterate that too many musical images are harmful for children, for they can lead to confusion and later blunt a child's emotional responsiveness completely. I never used more than two tunes a month, but used each one to carry out a wide range of musical study, aimed at arousing in my pupils the desire to listen to the piece of music in question again and again and ensuring that each time the children would discover new beauty in the piece. It was very important that as the

children listened to the music specially selected to further their mastering of the fundamentals of musical appreciation, there should be no haphazard, random musical impressions. After listening to tunes children should be encouraged to listen to the quiet of the fields and in the interval between the tunes they should be urged to aspire after an understanding of the beauty of Nature. (10, 54)

Music lends to fairy-tale characters real life, a heart and ideas; music leads children into the world of Goodness. (10, 56)

Music provides rich food for thought. Without musical education a child's full mental development is impossible. The roots of music are to be found not only in the world around us, but in man himself, his inner world, his thoughts and words. A musical image is a new revelation of the objects and phenomena of the real world. A child's attention is concentrated, as it were, on objects and phenomena which were revealed to him in a new light by music, and his thoughts paint a vivid picture; this picture begs for words. A child creates through words, gleaning from the world around him material for new concepts and ideas.

Music—imagination—fantasy—fairy-tale—creativity: that is the path by means of which the child is able to develop his mental and intellectual ability. Music conjures up vivid pictures for children. It helps a child better than anything else to apprehend the creative power of the mind. While listening to the mel-

odies of Grieg the children imagined to themselves fairy-tale caves, thick forests, good and evil creatures. Even the quietest among them felt the urge to speak; the children's hands stretched out for pencils and paper in their eagerness to reproduce the fairy-tale creations of their imagination in drawings. Music summons up mental energy in even the most inert of children. It is almost as if it poured into the cells of their brains some wondrous power. That impetus to children's mental abilities under the influence of music I came to regard as the emotional source of thought. (10, 55)

Gradually we are compiling a collection of musical works the children like best. From time to time we gather to listen music. I refer to this collection as our "musical box"; the children like this name and tell others with pride: "We have a music box". This has prompted us to select some of the finest pieces from the treasure house of our musical heritage and set up a "Music Room", where children can take pleasure in this beauty. . . . There we shall sing, learn to play the violin and piano, but that is still a plan for the future and for the moment we shall play tunes on our simple reed-pipes.

One overcast day we went out into the nearby grove and fashioned a reed-pipe out of an elder twig. We polished it smooth and cut out little holes. Then I played the tune of a Ukrainian folk song about a merry shepherd. It is difficult to express in words the excitement

that gripped the children. Each of them was anxious to try his hand at playing the pipe and they all started dreaming of musical instruments of their own. After that each one of them made a reed-pipe for himself. (10, 59)

Truly humane sentiments find expression in music, as they can in words. By stimulating a child's awareness of music we ennoble his thoughts and his aspirations. Our aim must be to let melody open up in each child's heart a life-giving source of human emotions. Just as in the vital words of his native speech, so in music the beauty of the world around him is revealed to a child in all its bright splendour. Yet tunes are the language of human emotions and they reveal to a child's heart more than the beauty of the world; they also reveal to men human greatness and dignity. When enthralled with music a child senses that he is a real person. A child's soul is that of a sensitive musician. If you succeed in reaching its taut strings then you shall be rewarded with the most enchanting music, and not only in the figurative but also in the direct sense. Childhood is as unthinkable without music as it is without play or without fairy-stories. . . .

Music is the most fruitful of soils in which there can grow up real communication between teacher and child. It opens men's hearts so to speak. As they listen to fine music, experience and delight in its beauty together, teacher and pupil draw closer to one another and come to understand each other better. (10, 60)

Words have never been adequate to explain music's infinite depth. Yet without words it is impossible even to draw near to that most subtle sphere of emotional revelation. I tried to make of my words, of my explanations of music, some kind of emotional stimulus which would awaken not only sensitivity to music as the direct language of the heart. Words should attune children's sensitive heart strings. . . . Explanations of music should contain a poetic element, something that brings words and music closer to each other. This I tried to achieve by appealing to pupils' emotional memories: with the help of words I created pictures that should awake memories of past experiences. . . . (12, 305)

I attempted to make those young hearts aware of man's subtlest feeling, the feeling of love. The positive influence which music can have in this sphere of teenagers' emotional life is enormous. Music which can embody the voice of the loving heart enthralled and captivated by the beauty of woman nurtures in future wives and husbands, mothers and fathers, the romantic, pure and noble emotion of tenderness. . . . I would advise all who teach children of this age to provide less talks and lectures, debates and question-and-answer evenings on this subject but rather to encourage them in silent thoughtful mood to listen to music on the theme of love. (12, 307)

## **School Means First and Foremost Books**

One of the essential principles in my teacher's creed is boundless faith in the educative power of books. Education involves above all words, books and meaningful human relationships. . . . Books are powerful tools without which I should be dumb or tongue-tied; for I should be unable to tell a child a hundredth part of what he needs to be told and what I actually do say. An intelligent inspired book can often be decisive in relation to a man's future. (29)

Reading is a window through which children see and come to understand the world and themselves. It is opened to a child only when, apart from actual reading, and even before he is first shown books, painstaking work on words is carried out, work which should embrace all spheres of children's activity and emotional life—work, play, communication with Nature, music, creativity. Without creative work that gives rise to beauty, without fairy-tales and fantasy, play and music it is impossible to imagine reading as one of the spheres of a child's intellectual life. . . . A child will remain blind to the beauty of the world around him if he has not been made aware of the beauty of words read from books. The path to a child's heart and mind can take two forms, which at first glance might appear to contradict each other: it can lead from books, from reading to oral speech, or from living words, that have become part of a child's intellectual life, to books, to reading and to writing. (10, 169)

Life in the world of books is quite different from the ordered diligent performance of homework. It is possible for a child to leave school with flying colours in his exams and yet with no inkling of what intellectual life involves, and without having experienced that profound human joy to be derived from reading and thinking. Life in the world of books introduces us to the world of beautiful ideas, enables us to delight in the riches of our cultural heritage and to ennoble our character. (14, 8)

Do not be afraid of devoting whole hours of classwork to books. Do not be afraid of devoting a whole day to a journey round the "ocean of books". Let books thrill young hearts and capture young imaginations! (14, 8)

One of the causes of spiritual poverty is a lack of real reading which enthralls a man's mind and heart and stimulates thinking in relation to the world outside, in relation to man's inner world. . . . How should an intelligent and beautiful book be made a means of self-education? What should we do to ensure that young people were held captive not only by tape-recorders and radiogrammes, dance-halls and cinemas but also by intelligent and beautiful books? (32)

Let the most joyous of a school's celebrations be its Book Festival. On that day our local collective farm makes presents of books to the pupils. . . . Encourage children not only to want

to read but to read and reread their favourite books. Let the rereading of good books become an intellectual need of older pupils just like repeated listening to favourite pieces of music.

Yet how should we set about this? Vital in this connection, of course, is good literature teaching. (13, 2)

It is impossible to assess pupils' views and convictions from the answers they give to their teachers' questions. (If it were possible to mould a child's outlook by having him swot wise maxims education would be a very easy undertaking.) Still less can we draw conclusions relating to children's interpretation of the world from the answers they proffer during literature lessons. I was always afraid of forgetting even for a minute the important principle that literature is studied not so that a few years after leaving school a young man or woman is still able to repeat what he was made to swot up at school. Life confronts the individual with "exams" at every step, and it is through his behaviour and activity that he is able to show he is equal to the test. The ultimate goal for the study of literature is the moulding of man's inner world—his morals and his cultural and aesthetic sensitivity. When I observed how pupils in their early teens could be thrilled and almost overwhelmed by literary characters, and how after listening to works of literature they would start pondering on their own lives this was infinitely more important than the precision of their answers on the text in hand. Perhaps



that is to a certain extent an exaggeration but for the last thirty years now I have been constantly aware of the fact that putting questions to pupils after they have read a work of literature is sometimes just as ill-advised as asking them after they have been listening to music to reproduce in words what they have just heard. (12, 129)

Without reading there can be no true and worthwhile communication between teacher and pupil. . . . When I was making a close study of what and the way pupils in their early and late teens read I was horrified to see that they had no idea that real reading involved thoughtful penetration of a book's meaning and mental exertion. They were only used to one kind of reading—reading textbooks. . . .

I have realised that adolescents need to be taught how to read. In our school we set aside a special "Thinking Room". Here we collected together over three hundred of the "cleverest books" we could find. In practice it meant we had a small reading room. (13, 2)

The room's very name aroused interest among the pupils it was designed for. When we first opened that room I told the pupils about an interesting book which dealt with the life of Lomonosov. I also showed the pupils the list of books I had read which I had been keeping for over twenty years. I depicted the supreme happiness for the educated man and woman—happiness of communion with books. (13, 2)

Reading in the "Thinking Room" was always a quiet occupation, for no one was allowed to disturb the peace there with a single word, and what was more, the room was specially set up in a quiet corner of the school garden. (13, 2)

Some of our reading time was specially set aside for poetry. I used to recite from some of the finest poetic works that have become part of the world's cultural heritage: verses by Pushkin, Lermontov, Zhukovsky, Nekrasov, Fet, Shevchenko, Lesya Ukrainka, Schiller, Mickiewicz, Heine, Béranger and various other poets. The children were soon eager to learn by heart a poem that had particularly appealed to their imagination. In the course of four years' poetry sessions the pupils learnt a good number of poems. Yet they never started memorising them before they had come to appreciate their breath-taking beauty. . . .

The children were particularly fond of having long works read to them in instalments. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* was spread over several weeks. The setting in which the children listened to the book enhanced their enjoyment. Other books which I read in instalments included Maxim Gorky's *Childhood*, Valentin Katayev's *A White Sail Gleams in the Distance* . . . and P. Bazhov's *Malachite Casket*. (10, 173)

A library was provided even for the pupils from Class 1. It consisted of four sections. The first contained stories that were in my opinion

particularly valuable for the children's moral, intellectual and aesthetic education. (We used to buy enough copies of each book to be used at lesson-time.) This section catered for the four years of primary instruction.

In the stories which were selected there was a profoundly humane message easily accessible to the child and conveyed through vivid artistic images. . . .

The second section of that class library was made up of stories by modern Russian and Ukrainian authors: about our daily life, the work of Soviet men and women, the peace movement, the exploits of heroes during the Great Patriotic War (1941-45), about child-heroes. My pupils showed particular interest in the verses of Sergei Mikhalkov and Samuil Marshak and the stories of Gaidar, Kassil, Nosov, Prilezhayeva, Trublaini, Yanovsky, Zbanatsky, Linkov, Ivanenko, Voronkova, Zhitkov and Alexandrova.

The third section was reserved for fairy-tales, poems and fables. . . .

The fourth section of the library contained Greek myths. Here after a lengthy search we had assembled books containing the myths of Ancient Greece presented in a form accessible for children. Ancient mythology has an important part to play in children's intellectual and aesthetic education. Not only does it unfold before children a fascinating page from the history of man's culture but it stimulates the imagination, stretches the mind and encourages interest in the distant past. (10, 171-72)

Youth is an age of poetry in the broad sense of that word.... Boys and girls in their late teens sense the poetic element not only in lyric verse but also in prose. True poetry unfolds before them in works that reflect not only real life, with all its joys and sorrows, but also in works permeated with the conviction that life's truth will triumph. A work can depict profound grief experienced by its heroes, a plot may have a tragic ending, but even death is interpreted by pupils in the senior classes as the supreme act to affirm life, if the hero dies in the name of those who shall live after him. By the time boys and girls have reached their late teens they have already formed mature views on this subject. They scornfully dismiss works which tend to present everything through rose-coloured spectacles, and round off the plot with a happy end. "Such things don't happen in real life" they say after reading works of this kind. (6, 208)

There is a noticeable tendency for each new generation on approaching adulthood to adopt an uncreasingly uncompromising stand on the purity of intimate emotions. Boys and girls in their late teens hope to find in poetic works portrayals of love that is loyal and ennobling and strong enough to overcome all tribulation. (6, 209)

A fast-moving plot in a work of fiction does not satisfy readers of this age group if it is not accompanied with profound ideas: ideas which

throw light upon the philosophical aspect of social relations, or men's emotional and intellectual lives, are not only read and reread time and time again, but excerpts from books containing them are recorded for future reference and the ideas are analysed and interpreted. Pupils often look for opportunities for engaging in polemics with authors. . . . (6, 175)

As they approach adulthood boys and girls not only feel a greater need for aesthetic experience but also for aesthetic activity. . . . Many try their hand at poetry. The boys' verses are usually concerned above all with intellectual and philosophical assessment of phenomena from the world around them. They contain no expression of their feelings as yet, no descriptions of Nature. Verses by girls from 12 upwards are distinguished by more subtle, emotionally intense expression of feelings, particularly expression of love for Nature. (6, 159-60)

Unfortunately there are still large numbers of literature teachers whose pupils are unable to write compositions. In their efforts *to force* pupils to write compositions these teachers swing from one extreme to the other: either they present their pupils with ready-made models borrowed from teaching manuals, or on the contrary, they demand that what a child writes be produced "absolutely independently". The upshot of all this is that nothing is achieved for the simple reason that the teacher himself cannot write compositions and that his pupils

have never heard from him a single vivid word that is *all his own*. (13, 11)

It would be naïve to expect that a child be spurred on by the beauty of his environment to sit down and write a composition straight off. Creative activity is not something that children engage in intuitively or instinctively: it has to be taught. A child will only put together an essay, after he has heard a teacher describe a natural scene, for instance. My first composition which I read my pupils was composed on a quiet evening as we sat at the edge of a pond. I aimed to help the children understand and sense how a visual image could be conveyed in words. At first the children merely reproduced my own compositions, but gradually they progressed to independent descriptions of scenes from Nature which had impressed them: individual creativity was emerging. In this process it is very important that children should be made aware of the emotional and aesthetic nuances of words. A child will learn to write a composition only when each word before him is like a little brick which has a previously appointed place. Children will then select the only brick that is suitable in a given context. They will never be able to pick the first words which happen to come into their head. Their emotional and aesthetic sensitivity will prevent them from doing so. (10, 180)

During childhood each boy or girl is a poet. . . . I am not one of those who go into

raptures over children's natural talent, and am far from the belief that every child is a poet by nature. Man's awareness of the beautiful brings out the poet in his soul. If this awareness is not nurtured a pupil remains indifferent to the beauty of Nature and the beauty of words, a creature for whom there is no difference between the acts of throwing a stone into a pond and at a singing nightingale. Introducing a child to the joy of poetic inspiration and awakening in his heart the living seeds of creativity is just as important as teaching a child reading and arithmetic. In some children the source of creativity is richer and in others poorer. I have observed how in some cases children's poetic inspiration is not a short-lived soaring heavenwards, not an explosion, but a constant inner need. (10, 186)

Once more I must stress that children's poetic creativity should not be regarded as a sign of talent. It is just as common and natural a phenomenon as the ability to drawing: it is something all children work at, it is something every child experiences. Yet poetic creativity becomes a commonplace phenomenon in a child's life only when a teacher opens up to his pupils the beauty of the world around them and the beauty of language. Just as love of music cannot be fostered without music, so love for poetic creativity cannot be fostered without creative activity. (10, 189)

A man who loves the works of Pushkin, Heine, Shevchenko, Lesya Ukrainka, who seeks to

*express beautifully his impressions of the beauty which surrounds him, whose search for the right word has become for him as essential a need as his need to contemplate the beautiful, for whom the concept of the beauty of man finds expression above all in respect of human dignity, in the affirmation of the most just—communist—relations between men, can never become coarse or cynical. (10, 189)*

### **Looking at Pictures Is an Introduction to the World of Feelings**

A mere week after my pupils started work at their "School of Joy" I asked them to bring along drawing books and pencils so that we could draw. The next day we went out onto the lawn in front of the school. I asked them to look around and tell me what they could see that was beautiful. Then I suggested that they should draw what appealed to them most. . . .

Quiet descended. The children were completely absorbed in their drawings. I had read a great deal about methods for teaching drawing and now here I was confronted with real-life pupils. I soon realised that children's pictures and the actual process of drawing were an essential part of their emotional and cultural experience. Children do not simply transpose onto paper something from the world around them; they live in that world, walk into it like creators of beauty, and they take true delight in beauty. (10, 44)



The essential starting-point for appreciating painting is firsthand observation of Nature. In order to understand, feel and come to love painting, the individual's emotional awareness has to be developed, and that takes quite a while, and the ideal place for this is the world of Nature. (12, 307)

There are pictures that are beyond a young child and these should be studied at a later age, but there are no pictures that can be enjoyed in childhood and then do not warrant a "second look" later in life. There is nothing simple or ordinary in true art. . . . "Ordinary" pictures such as Shishkin's *Rye*, Savrasov's *The Rooks Have Come to Roost*, Levitan's *Golden Autumn* and *Birch Grove*, Yuon's *Afternoon in Late Winter* and Plastov's *First Snow* should be enjoyed by young children and teenagers; each time there will be something new to appreciate in them. Repeated study of pictures is a source of enrichment, it nurtures the emotional memory and heightens our capacity to appreciate beauty. Precisely this repeated exposure to works of fine art gradually makes it an integral part of young people's emotional and intellectual experience. This is why at each new stage in a pupil's intellectual, emotional and aesthetic development he should be introduced to new works of art and at the same time turn again to pictures studied previously. (12, 308)

By the time they have reached Class 3 and definitely Class 4 boys and girls have started to

put together their own small picture galleries. They have started to collect reproductions. I was glad to see how eager they were to look at these pictures. This individual experience within the world of art is far more important than the organisation of school "galleries", etc. If pictures are hanging on school walls for months at a stretch pupils soon stop noticing them . . . . (12, 309)

When working with pupils in their teens teachers should pay particular attention to those paintings which reflect man's complex and infinitely varied inner world. I gave pride of place to pictures depicting moral fibre and man's moral victories in his fight to uphold lofty ideals. . . . It is of course necessary to discuss pictures in far more detail and at a far more profound level with pupils of this age group than with small children. (12, 309)

Stirring thoughts with regard to the history of our Homeland are aroused by such pictures as Vasnetsov's *Heroes*, Grekov's *Off to Join Budyonny's Detachment*, Serov's *Siberian Partisans*, Prorokov's *At Babi Yar*. Deep hatred of fascism and the forces of evil are summoned up by Kukryniksy's *Finale*, the work *Buchenwald Victims* by the anti-fascist German sculptor Cremer and Prorokov's picture entitled *Mother*. I drew attention to the patriotic idea of loyalty to the Homeland and fortitude in the struggle with the enemy. Boys and girls are moved by valour and an uncompromising stand against

the enemy. I first made a study of Cremer's group of sculptured figures with pupils in Class 5 and later we returned to it every year. Each time the boys and girls picked out new details in the emotional power of those figures plagued by hunger, torture but still unvanquished. (12, 310)

An important place in the work carried out by our team of teachers is accorded to techniques designed to develop the individual's capacity to feel and to sense in their hearts the shades of emotion, their ability to discern in the eyes of others sorrow, humiliation, suffering, bewilderment and loneliness. Most important of all pupils must be taught how to discern and sense in the eyes of their neighbour the latter's need for human sympathy and help. . . . Eyes provide us with the vital mirror of thoughts and feelings. Whatever picture we might choose to study I always would direct the teenagers' attention to the eyes of the figure depicted in the artist's work. (12, 311)

Eyes are an infinitely complicated world of thoughts, feelings and emotions. A whole series of discussions connected with looking at pictures was centred round that world. (12, 312)

Our school was fortunate enough to obtain a reproduction of Leonardo da Vinci's fresco *The Last Supper*. A number of discussions were devoted to that picture. . . . I called the pupils'

attention to the complex emotions aroused by Christ's announcement that one of those present would betray him reflected above all in the eyes of the apostles. Absorbed in this study of emotions boys and girls forget, of course, that they are looking at a picture on a biblical subject. They are aware of the complex world of human passions, the clash between good and evil, nobility of spirit and moral fall implicit in betrayal. (12, 312)

The evenings devoted to Leonardo da Vinci's pictures *Mona Lisa* and *Madonna with a Flower*, and Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* were enthralling occasions for the medium-school pupils with an atmosphere of rare poetic inspiration. I talked to them of the possible reasons behind the smile immortalised by the artist in the lips and eyes of *Mona Lisa*. In this work the eyes are particularly profound and endowed with poetic expressiveness. The moment captured by the artist in the eyes of the young woman is a whole world of feelings of its own. It was not easy to find a word which would conjure up in the boys' and girls' imagination the poetic concept of those vague and fleeting emotions without which the heart remains deaf to poetic feeling.

Those discussions devoted to Raphael's pictures though demanding were also a joyful time for me and filled with enchantment.... The more fitting words I used to find to single out the eternal truths of this earth which raise man up above God, the more powerful and

moving was the impact of the beauty of art and the beauty of human feeling on those children. . . . In the image of the holy virgin who offers to the world as a sacrifice to save mankind a part of her very self, her very own son, my pupils came to appreciate the supreme beauty of this world—the power of a mother's love. In the eyes of the mother are not only anxiety and awareness of suffering to come; the shape of her mouth belies not only humble acceptance of the inevitable but also firm resolve. There is no other work of art in the world in which eyes express so strikingly the power of a mother's love. I. Kramskoi referred to the *Sistine Madonna* as a portrait embodying the thoughts of the people of the whole earth. He maintained that even when mankind ceased to believe in God, even then that picture would not lose its great value. This thought of Kramskoi's serves to express the universal human relevance of Raphael's creation. (12, 312-14)

At the time when the pupils in my care were approaching manhood and womanhood we turned many times to that work of Raphael's, Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, Vermeer's *Reading Girl*, Delacroix's *Liberty Leading the People*, Ingres' *Spring*, Rubens' *Helena Fourment* and *Portrait of the Chambermaid of the Archduchess Isabella*, Serov's *Girl with Peaches*, Borovikovsky's *Portrait of M. I. Lopukhina*, and Yaroshenko's *Girl Student*. I am firmly convinced that when vague desires and urges first come knocking at young hearts it is most im-

portant to bring out the full beauty of woman as the supreme and universal embodiment of human beauty. I attempted to help those boys and girls to view with awe that beauty and regard it as something ideal and inviolate, and that young girls should be filled with a sense of intimate purity. No amount of moral exhortations . . . can help noble and lofty sentiments take root in young hearts if words are not accompanied by the beautiful image, by art. (12, 314)

Beauty speaks to our hearts independently of any words and does not require explanations. We delight in a rose as a complete entity, and its beauty would vanish were we to pluck the petals from the flower and analyse the essence of that beauty. There is no need to explain to an adolescent what is clear of itself. Let him imagine himself in the world in which the hero, whose image has captured his heart, lived and overcame the evil forces. (12, 204)

Beauty is an instrument for fostering a sensitive conscience. As a young child, and more and more as he grows up, a child should learn independently to appreciate beauty and his aesthetic awareness should be gradually heightened more and more throughout his life. (14, 2)

## V

### THE COLLECTIVE

#### Rallying Pupils Together

There is no other example of education in practice which I have come to respect and admire as much as the work of Anton Makarenko. For thirty-two years I have been working in schools and for thirty-two years I have been analysing the theoretical conclusions he drew from his work as a teacher and educator. His passionate rejection of idle talk and phrasemongering enthralled me as did the boldness of his teaching theory. I admire him for his true, uncompromising humanity, for his profound faith in his fellow-men. I admire the way he saved hundreds of children in those difficult years when new Soviet schools were being organised. His activities demonstrated that the Soviet teaching theory is a truly humane one. For me he was not some unattainable example, but a friend and helper in the struggle to uphold the rights of man, which, since the moment the first shots were fired on board the battleship *Aurora*, has been going on for over fifty years now. (28)

In Makarenko's books I sought the true guiding principles of which I was deeply in need. All my modest teaching experience represents the fruit of those searchings. If, over the years, in addition to those true principles I also encountered ideas in Makarenko's system which today appear perhaps not beyond criticism, such after all is the dialectic of teaching. (28)

Fostering the collective spirit among school-children involves first and foremost creating a primary collective within individual classes and fostering positive relationships between individual pupils and the class collective. (1, 17)

Makarenko pointed out that within our education system there is only a small number of well-organised school collectives. Careful study of work in schools and our own experience here in Pavlysh have convinced me that the reasons for this should be sought not so much in the inclination of the class collective "to remain detached from the overall school collective within the framework of its individual school-class interests", as in the lack of positive primary collectives in most classes. (1, 18)

In order to foster communist convictions, particularly on moral subjects, it is essential that the individual's moral experience at each stage of his development should correspond to



the mental capacities he has come to possess. This potential manifests itself only in activity. Communist children's organisations—Pioneer and Komsomol units—play a very important role in this connection. The expression of principles in action is the basic condition without which concrete forms of work undertaken by organisations for small children and teenagers cannot foster communist convictions, forge young people's will and determination and mould character. (7, 168)

Many teachers complain that pupils' collectives show little initiative and have to be spurred before they undertake or accomplish anything. Yet true initiative has to be nurtured. To this end it is essential first of all that interesting joint activity be arranged, so that the children gain experience in the effort to attain a common goal, and also in the subordination of personal interests to those of a collective. (1, 100)

In Class 8 the pupils at our school set up the first Komsomol organisation within the framework of a single class. Great excitement accompanied these preparations. Indeed most of the activities of the young Pioneer's detachment had been for all intents and purposes preparation for enrolment in this organisation, which the pupils of 14 upwards came to regard as an adult organisation. It was essential that each member found his own path to the Komsomol and was led there by his own mature convictions. (12, 234)

The teachers at our school went out of their way to see that no pupil joined the Komsomol without attaining the necessary degree of social awareness and political maturity. In this context the pupil's individual experience of social work was very important. I did my best to ensure that in my class every pupil experienced the joy of being needed by others and of working for the collective. (12, 234)

It became a tradition at the school that the Pioneer detachment on completion of its activities in that capacity would hand down its red ties to those Octoberites about to join the young Pioneers. The girls and boys concerned would take off their Pioneer ties and knot them round their young friends' necks. Each pupil would give his particular tie to a boy or girl with whom he had previously made friends. Some of the pupils in Class 8 would have brothers or sisters in Class 3 to whom they would pass on this most precious of family heirlooms.

On receiving the red ties the children would make the solemn pledge of young Leninists. . . . To mark the day he joined the young Pioneer organisation each child would be given a present, namely a book about the life and achievement of some great man or woman.

That rally made an indelible impression on the hearts and minds of my pupils. On the solemn occasion of the young Pioneers' enrolment the most important factor was that the red ties were handed down from one genera-

tion of young Leninists to the next. A red tie—the symbol of revolutionary struggle—cannot be bought or sold in shops, it is handed directly to the new young Pioneer at school and then carefully looked after by him. It is not worn every day but only on special occasions, at functions or pioneer rallies—such is the tradition that has gone down in our young Pioneer unit. (10, 234)

Interest in academic work should not be the only interest in the life of a schoolchild. Children should be united by sharing all the interests that are important to them. Those teachers who try and foster a collective spirit based on nothing but shared academic activities are bound to fail . . . .

It should be borne in mind that a collective spirit is stimulated not only through satisfaction stemming from overcoming obstacles, but also through joy stemming from joint diversions and play. (1, 23)

Work carried out over a period of several months by the members of a collective becomes a traditional activity: it enhances childhood as an unforgettable experience and implants a sense of duty to the collective in a child's mind. (1, 23)

Encouraging pupils to work for the sake of the collective and make such work a central factor of their thinking lives is the most difficult task of all, but at the same time the most important that faces the teacher. (1, 24)

Pupils from the youngest classes should not be set general long-term goals such as successful completion of the academic year, moving up into the next class, etc., since that does not necessarily lead children to become active members of the collective. If it is possible at all to introduce long-term perspective into the life of a collective of young pupils, then it should always be linked with some very colourful, exciting and joyful event. . . . (1, 25)

Some skilled educators are able to create an atmosphere in which children look forward excitedly not to some celebration, but the most ordinary of everyday happenings such as the collection of scrap-metal or tree planting. (1, 25)

Children should be brought to realise that after attaining a goal or carrying out some piece of work or other they become more worthwhile people and their lives will become more interesting. The main result of what they accomplished should be the sense of moral satisfaction and pride experienced by the collective as a whole. (1, 46)

Initially an objective put before a collective should provide as many as possible opportunities for individual, personal work on the part of the pupils, and in addition the results of the efforts made by each one of them should be fairly concrete. (1, 48)

The potential of any working collective is measured by the development of the individual capacities of each individual member. (2, 31)

Attention and concern shown by the teacher to the pupil leave an indelible impression on the latter. This applies still more so to attention and concern shown him by the collective. The teacher's task is to see that every pupil should experience a sense of gratitude to the collective for attention shown him and help afforded at a difficult moment. (5, 54).

A magnanimous person is distinguished first and foremost by his love for his fellow-men. This love is the source of his devotion and loyalty to the common cause . . . . We try here to mould relationships within the class collectives in such a way that the bulk of each pupil's effort be directed to concern for other people—friends, parents and all those who are in need of help and support. Moral experience which is gleaned in the context of such relationships is an inexhaustible source of moral dignity, disinterested kindness, sincere concern and responsiveness. (5, 55)

If a pupil has not done anything for other people, albeit for the period of a month, this means that something has gone wrong with his education. (5, 56)

Gentleness, kindness and amiability on the part of a collective is a tremendously powerful

force, which like a rapid torrent of water carries all along with it, even the most indifferent. (10, 50)

After teaching children to help the others in their own class a teacher should gradually make the transition to people who are not directly connected with the school—old people, invalids and others. Education based on high moral principles is inconceivable without such help being encouraged. It represents the most concrete expression of socialist relations among Soviet men and women most easily understood by small children. (1, 246)

In some cases helping other people proves the decisive force linking the pupil with the collective. This applies first and foremost to young orphans.... Even the slightest indifference shown such children, which might have gone unnoticed by a child with parents, is seen by orphans to be highly unjust and makes them turn away from the collective which they start to distrust and suspect. (1, 246)

Responsibility to the collective should not be nurtured with words, but actions. The more a collective does for a pupil the keener the pupil's sense of gratitude for the help afforded him and the more deeply he will feel the links that bind him to his comrades and his responsibilities towards them.

A teacher who tries to foster pupils' sense of duty to the collective through criticism or

“dressing down” is not going to succeed. Criticism from teachers or fellow pupils that is not backed up by concern and assistance often serves merely to embitter a pupil. (1, 243)

### **The Collective: an Infinitely Complex Sphere of Emotional and Cultural Interaction**

Education is effected within a group of people, and the effectiveness of the calculated, planned and purpose-orientated efforts of the teacher depends on the degree to which the moral achievements of the human race, *man's world*, the ideas of society and state are reflected in that group. (12, 23)

Education theory dating from the first decade after the revolution is associated with the names Nadezhda Krupskaya, Lunacharsky, Blonsky, Lepeshinsky, Shatsky, Soroka-Rosinsky, Pinkovich, Pistrak, and all of them regarded the collective as the most important means of promoting the all-round development of the individual. The outstanding educationists named above emphatically warned teachers against methods which level each and every individuality and stressed indefatigably that the richness of society stems from the diversity of the individuals who make up that society, and therefore the supreme purpose of education should be to educate citizens worthy of the name of Man. (28)

Concern with the educative role of the collective means concern shown for the spiritual enrichment and growth of each member in the collective and the vast range of relations within it. (12, 216)

When forging a collective it is vital not to lose sight of each child within it with his unique inner world, and carefully nurture each one. Development of the individual is a process closely bound up with the development of the collective, but in a specific sense it is a special territory for the educator. (5, 5)

What does the reproach to the effect that a school or class is not a real collective imply? First of all, and most important of all, it means that in the establishment concerned pupils are not taught to appreciate the need for other, fellow human beings . . . . The skill and art of forging a collective and nurturing a collective spirit begins when a teacher shows profound and careful attention to each pupil as an individual with interests, inclinations, needs and abilities of his own. The spiritual riches of a collective take shape and blossom only when hundreds, even thousands of emotional ties grow up and develop between the pupils, ties which will eventually emerge as an inexhaustible stimulus for that ever-present need, the most human need of all — the need for other, fellow human beings. (14, 2)

Close study of the intellectual and emotional development of schoolchildren has convinced



us that the thoughts and ideas which grip their minds most profoundly of all are those which we would call noble. The essential feature of these thoughts and ideas is that they open up to pupils prospects for working for the good of society and the collective. (6, 21)

Noble ideas are invaluable from the point of view of education in that they bring together and make compatible the collective and the individual, the social and personal. This unity is the essential condition for moral education in general. (6, 22)

A decline or interruption of emotional and intellectual ties leads to those abnormal phenomena in the forging of pupil collectives (particularly where pupils are going through what we know as the awkward, "transitional" age) that are all too often to be encountered in teaching practice. . . . Yet they are all secondary factors that stem from a decline in that unity of ideas and preoccupations based on shared noble principles. (6, 27)

A collective in which a child does not find any stimulation for his mind and emotions and which cannot lead him towards lofty goals will not be a source of authority for him. (6, 97)

Why does it happen all so often in the school context that a class after being a first-rate collective in junior school literally fell apart in the older classes? This happened when, after

discovering all there was to discover about his peers early in his school career, a young teenager has nothing new to seek and does not find what his heart and mind are so anxiously and insistently demanding. The reason why he cannot find it is that the life of the collective is not being enriched by interesting, mentally stimulating activity based on high principles. (12, 216)

A collective is not a faceless mass. It exists as a wealth of individualities. . . . Its educative potential is based on what there is within each member, his spiritual riches, what he brings to the collective and what others take from him. Yet the rich endowment of each personality is only the basis of a full and interesting life for the collective. The collective becomes an educative factor on the strength of its joint activity in which there unfolds the noble inspiration behind its work of noble moral purpose. (12, 215)

An important principle of our work is making sure that every child be a member of several collectives during his years at the school; each one of them should open up before him one or other of the many facets of man's intellectual and emotional life. (9, 23)

Correct organisation of education for children in their early teens implies achieving a situation in which each pupil *came into his own* precisely in that activity which corresponds

most fully to his talents and abilities. . . . There is nothing worse for pupils of this age group than to be forced all to do the same thing. However attractive some kind of collective activity might be, it can never be interesting for everyone or be interesting always. . . . Many teachers who complain of a lack of cohesion in collectives of these pupils fail precisely because they attempt to rein in the diverse interests and needs of the pupils in the uninteresting framework of repetitive "projects". (6, 89)

One of the factors which complicates the education of young teenagers is to be found in the qualitative changes in the relationships between the individual and the collective. The urge to belong to a collective that is already to be found among children of pre-school age becomes increasingly conscious and definite in the early teens. They start to seek not merely constant opportunities for communication, which also takes place with pupils from the junior classes, but also those who share their ideas. The opportunities for finding others who share their thoughts, views, convictions and intellectual interests and moral principles are appreciated by children in their early teens as a force that attracts them to the collective. A pupil, at the age of 14-15 in particular, sets store not only by the fact that in his immediate collective his comrades share his interests and take part in the same activities as he does, but also by that their views on all fundamental

questions of interest to him coincide. (6, 150)

The correlation between the collective (general) and personal (individual) elements in the inner life of a young teenager is more complex than in children from the junior classes. A pupil, particularly at the age of 14 or 15, is interested not merely in what his friends are doing, but also in *what they think about their activity*, and the attitudes with which they approach the work in question. In collectives consisting of younger children individual pupils do not yet stand out as creative personalities, or in the light of their aspirations to achieve something quite unique, all of their own. However when it comes to those in their early teens this side of their character becomes all-important and gains the upper hand in their relationship with the rest of the collective: they see the children in the collective as individuals each of which is set apart by distinctive characteristics, and is unique in his activities, his mind and his abilities. . . . The search for the like-minded begins at this stage and becomes one of the most important factors binding groups of these young teenagers together. (6, 154)

The life and activity of the collective satisfies the adolescent only if he is able to satisfy his various interests within that collective. Between the ages of 12 and 15 schoolchildren's intellectual interests come to vary more and more: a worthwhile collective in which mem-

bers share the same noble ideals is no longer in a position to satisfy all the members' interests, and so the young person's participation in the life of several collectives starts to assume increasing importance. (6, 155)

It is important to remember that a child in his early teens is not always within a collective, and neither are you the teacher always with him. Often he will be by himself. It is important that when on his own he should feel the urge to think or meditate, visualise in his mind's eye a majestic picture of the beautiful and heroic, and also to imagine himself in the complex conditions of the struggle to uphold good. Without minutes and hours of this kind there can be no real individuality and no young heart will sense a noble urge to aspire after a moral ideal. This does not imply self-adulation, or any selfish setting himself apart from the collective. It is merely a stage in the individual's intellectual and mental activity, the stage of self-education, assertion of personal convictions. I always went out of my way to give every pupil of that age ample material for individual mental activity—for a strict rigorous look at himself, so that he might judge himself by the highest standard of all, that of communist principles. (12, 205)

Long periods in a collective demand changes of scene—solitude, complete relaxation after the tension which meaningful communication involves. . . . A long rest away from the

collective is essential after long periods in school. After each term at school a young teenager should have time on his own, or in the family circle. This is just as important for him as is the rich, versatile life in the collective. (12, 107)

Once again I feel I should warn against inaccurate interpretations of what I call individual intellectual activity. This does not imply dreams that have no relation to real life, not fruitless flights of fantasy, but above all thoughts on such questions as what lends a man's life meaning, what is important to him, what concerns him. It implies reflection on work and dreams of future prospects in that sphere, reflection about what has already been achieved and what should be achieved in the future.

If there is no full-blooded life rich in ideas, no work and no inspiring moral atmosphere in the collective, then there cannot be any really meaningful intellectual activity for the individual directed towards self-assessment and self-education. (12, 205)

The educational potential of the collective and the curative power of work are all elementary truths in the world of education, but they do not extend beyond the elementary level, if there is no individual mental activity in the course of which ideals emerge and take root. An ideal as regards moral behaviour has social and at the same time profoundly emotional im-

plications: moral ideals reflect the individual's political, moral, aesthetic principles on the personal plane. (12, 206)

Compatibility of social and personal interests is the cornerstone of true freedom for man. Freedom of the individual finds expression not in man's independence of society, but in the harmonious combination of personal interests and social interests, in the deep interaction of social and personal ideals. In the Programme of the CPSU it is stated: "Communism is the system under which the abilities and talents of free man, his best moral qualities, blossom forth and reveal themselves in full."

### **What Can Be Expected of a Children's Collective?**

How useful it would be for the teaching profession if a careful and sober assessment was made of the scope of abilities available to collectives of young children (and youngsters in their early and late teens) and of the tasks that are quite outside their reach. This is important not so as *to undermine faith* in the potential of the collective; on the contrary, once demagoguery has been ruled out, what is important is *precise definition* of the conditions in which it can really become a powerful educational force.

The teacher's task is to interweave all the diverse influences into one and achieve where possible harmony between them. (24)

A correct intellectual and emotional interaction between the collective and the individual for pupils in their early teens requires consideration, tact and discretion on the collective's part to all strictly intimate matters. It requires great skill on the part of the teacher to determine the border-line beyond which outside interference in the individual's private life is intolerable. The higher the individual pupil's intellectual level and the more profound and pure his moral convictions, the broader that sphere is, and the richer the intellectual and emotional life of the collective, so that the individual might find within it the source of his subsequent development. (6, 161)

It is difficult to find anyone who in his life has never committed mistakes; indeed such mistakes are particularly likely in childhood when the process of the emergence of moral principles is under way. Yet not one of the child's deeds can be compared with an analogical act carried out by an adult. Theft within a collective of children is something entirely different when compared to a similar act perpetrated by adults. If a child's misdeed is exposed and censured in the same way as that of an adult, this leaves its mark on a sensitive child's heart for a very long time (sometimes for life). A child who makes a mistake and is publicly shamed in front of the collective becomes withdrawn and estranged in relation to his friends and—what is particularly undesirable—his inclinations and endeavours to at-



tain positive goals are dampened and his desire to be honest and upright also decreases. This is why among all undesirable actions, cases of child theft demand particular tact and attention and an understanding of a child's inner motives and emotions. (5, 13)

Indiscriminate use of punishments undermines the cohesion in a schoolchildren's collective and often leads to joint action on the part of all the children in the group concerned to conceal the misdemeanour committed. Initially from the children's point of view these tactics represent just defence of the collective in face of a teacher's unfair behaviour. It is well-known that in the junior classes the children do not embark on such behaviour. At that stage children talk openly and sincerely to their teacher about the wrongdoings of their classmates. In junior class there is no enmity between the wrongdoer and the children who tell the teacher about him. At that time children who openly tell their teacher about the misdemeanours of their fellow pupils are not called "telltale" or "sneaks" or other unpleasant names. These words appear in children's vocabulary later, at the time they start covering up for each other. (5, 144)

Whatever the circumstances leading pupils to cover up for each other the fundamental reason is always one and the same—namely ill-judged use of that most intricate of the educator's tools—punishment. (5, 45)

It is important not to lose sight of the dialectical contradiction inherent in the exertion of educational and moral pressures on the mind and soul of an individual during his formative years: the stronger the pressures brought to bear on the personality, the more likely they are to arouse inner protest, and sometimes even indignation. The teacher should approach carefully the question as to whether a collective can be made aware of something which a particular pupil would regard as something quite private and inviolate. The range of questions involved in the life of the individual citizen in modern socialist society has grown beyond recognition and is continuing to broaden. By baring to public gaze what an individual pupil would regard as personal and take close to heart, a teacher not only belittles his sense of dignity, but also blunts his emotional sensitivity, coarsens his nature and—perhaps without noticing it or even against his intentions—makes a child *thick-skinned*, a quality which finally leads to emotional ignorance. (14, 2)

Much is being said about “public opinion” within the collective, about its influence on the individual. . . . Such influence is possible, but it only comes to constitute a real force if a truly moral atmosphere reigns in the school or the collective and moral standards and values are taken seriously. Otherwise there can be no question of “public opinion” within the collective, without which a community of schoolchildren is like a loose, amorphous mass or crowd

and is not therefore a real collective. (14, 4)

While blindly adhering to the principle of "parallel influence", many teachers forget that a collective is not something faceless or abstract. When a teacher views a children's collective as an instrument which he has "close to hand" to use whenever he thinks fit, this means that he is ignoring the highly complex intellectual and emotional sphere of the collective linking its various members. (28)

Any structure, any organised arrangement of school collective plays its role in education work only if teachers have positive experience of collectivist relations gleaned from work within primary collectives in individual classes. (1, 22)

It is with deep regret that I regard those children, to which the collective "attaches" a strong, upstanding pupil. A child of weak character grows so used to regarding himself as someone weak-willed, that if he is riled as a "dimwit", a "blockhead" or "duffer", all he will do is respond with a wan smile. It is heart-rending to observe such children, and there are such children in our schools. (24)

If a collective of children comes to see itself as a single whole then through this unity considerable educational influence can be exerted, not so much when the collective criticises and punishes but when it accepts responsibility for

good and bad in general and also for wrongdoing perpetrated by individual members. (5, 48)

The intellectual and emotional sphere of the collective and those of the individual take shape thanks to the interaction of the one upon the other. The individual learns much from the collective, but at the same time no collective can thrive if the individual members do not possess rich inner resources and a wide range of interests. (28)

## VI

### MORALS AND CONVICTIONS

#### Man's Sacred Duty

Man should hold his duty to his country as something sacred. It is up to us fathers and mothers, and teachers to see that every young citizen holds that duty dear, just as an honest man holds dear his good name and the reputation of his family. (17)

One of the most important conditions for avoiding moral lapses during the adolescent period is to ensure that pupils from an early age take to heart the present and future destiny of their Homeland. Patriotic ideas, emotions, duties and responsibilities to one's country form the foundation of human dignity. (12, 197)

A world outlook is not merely a set of views on the world...but also the subjective state of the individual which finds expression in his thoughts, emotions, will and activity. The individual's world outlook combines his consciousness, ideas, convictions and activity. (11, 221)

Mankind even in the distant past arrived at the realisation that man possesses not only physical strength but also strength of mind—loyalty to his convictions, confidence in his right, unswerving resolution in face of difficulties, fearlessness. The concepts—strength of mind, courage and fortitude evolved in the course of history, gradually taking shape over the years. (6, 9)

The fact that thousands of heroes and brave fighters have laid down their lives for the sake of mankind's bright future long before that future became reality provides striking demonstration of the enormous transforming power of progressive ideas. Inspired by these ideas men became stronger, felt themselves to be invincible and went out to meet their death without considering it defeat.

However, the summit of social and moral progress was provided by communist ideas. They added to men's most noble quests and endeavours the lustre of scientific truth. Inspired by these ideas thousands of brave men felt themselves to be the instruments of the thoughts and hopes of the whole working people, and this filled them with still greater fervour. The source of the enthusiasm found in men and women inspired by communist ideas was for the first time in human history the active support of the popular masses.... In struggle, in privation, and in self-sacrifice thousands of brave men, champions of these noble ideals, found profound personal hap-

piness because they were aware that their goals can be attained and their dreams will come true. (6, 9)

Our very youngest pupils we introduce to a wide range of historical events; we read them stories of mankind's past history, of the struggle against social evils of yesterday and today. Special talks and lectures are devoted to the struggle by progressive social forces against the forces of reaction. One such series of lectures is entitled "Great Humanists—Champions of Mankind's Happiness" and it is designed for a period of five or six years. Special stress is laid on the emergence of communist ideas long before the advent of Marxism. Lectures and talks on the following subjects also provide a source of most useful instruction: "Forerunners of Scientific Communism", "Popular Uprisings from Ancient Times to the Twentieth Century", "The First Communists", "Lives Laid Down for the Ideals of Freedom". (14, 9)

Children are always hearing the word Communist. I went out of my way to ensure that in their minds this word and concept should be associated with the most vivid and inspiring figures of those men and women who fought to liberate our people from exploitation, for the construction of socialism, for the victory over fascism, and for the communist transformation of society. In my eyes, our aim as teachers should be to ensure that our children, heirs to the communist ideals of their fathers and

grandfathers should take pride in their exploits, be true masters of their own country and fight for the building and consolidation of communism.

To achieve this educational goal I concentrated my efforts above all on talks about well-known Communists. This series of discussions was known by the heading "Men with Ardent Hearts". I would tell the children about outstanding Communists of our country—Ivan Babushkin, Sergei Lazo, Yakov Sverdlov, Grigory Kotovsky, Felix Dzerzhinsky, Ter-Petrosyan (Kamo). The memorable lives and heroic struggle of these Communists who opposed tsarism and fought for the socialist revolution convinced the children that supreme happiness for the Communist consists in loyal service to his people, and the fight for the people's happiness.

From the very early days of our "School of Joy" till our pupils finally left school and embarked on their adult working lives or further studies, I read them extracts from Lenin's life and his works. We started out with vivid stories of Lenin's childhood and school days. With each passing month these readings devoted to Lenin embraced an ever wider range of topics dealing with history, communist ideology, and our Party's fight for the people's better future. The children learnt that the Communist Party represents the flower of our people, its finest sons and daughters. (10, 198)

A child's moral make-up, his attitude to social needs and to work devoted to his coun-



try's welfare depends on the way he is taught, from an early age, to regard the heroic exploits of his forefathers. I was able to make my young pupils' hearts beat quicker at the thought that here on this hillock where we were working heroes had shed their blood. Emotions strengthen the conviction that work on one's native soil for the good of the Homeland is a great happiness for the sake of which men were prepared to engage in life-and-death battles. In the innermost depths of a child's heart the voice of conscience speaks: you are walking beneath the bright sun, and are able to look up at the blue sky only because here beneath these poplars and birch trees, beneath these oaks and apple trees lie the bodies of those who preserved light and life for you. (10, 232)

It can never be stressed too often that children's emotional responses to the heroic past of their country, to the exploits of those heroes who gave their lives for our happiness do not weigh heavy on child's minds, or breed pessimistic thoughts. On the contrary, children's emotions in this situation are clearly marked with an optimistic attitude to the world around them and with radiant faith in the triumph of life. (9, 83)

The history of mankind's progress towards the summit of happiness communism—is alight with fire, as if made of red hot iron. Each line of this history shines out with the

light of all-consuming ardour for boys and girls. Educating each new generation of impassioned champions of communism means ensuring that young citizens feel their hearts beat as one with the hearts of such figures as Sergei Lazo, Felix Dzerzhinsky, Nikolai Gastello, Dmitry Karbyshv and Alexander Matrosov and that these inspiring pages of history should set fire to young hearts, inspiring them to emulate heroic exploits and teaching them *how to live their lives*. (12, 54)

For a child there should be no such thing as unthinking placid happiness. The more significant the material and intellectual benefits provided by the elder generation, the more important it is that they should be inspired by the example of those men and women who laid down their lives for their compatriots. I repeat, this is particularly important for young children at the age when their first conceptions of good and evil, of justice and injustice, of honour and dishonour are all taking shape. (9, 52)

The fundamental principle behind moral education, indispensable for young people's moral maturity is their ideal of their Homeland; moral uprightness and noble principles in young people stem from their vision of the world in terms of their duty to their country. Dearest of all else they hold the honour, glory, might and independence of their country. (12, 24)

Many years' experience of teaching in school have led me to believe that the impact and effectiveness of patriotic education depend upon the degree to which the individual is aware of the concept of the Homeland, and the clarity with which he perceives the world and himself within that world through patriotic eyes. To educate a true patriot ready to lay down his life for the independence of his Soviet Homeland means filling the day-to-day life of young people with noble sentiments that will colour all the discoveries and actions of pupils in this age group. (12, 210)

**Devotion to an Ideal Is Impossible Unless  
Man Feels a Deep Need  
for His Fellows**

Noble ideals are beyond the grasp of the heartless individual who lacks sensitivity. Heartlessness breeds indifference to other people, indifference leads to egoism, and egoism to cruelty.

Some people maintain that since in our day and age men need to be educated to become strong, resolute and ready for anything, there is no need to talk of kindness, sincerity and sensitivity. This is a profoundly mistaken view. Yes indeed our main goal in education is to foster in the heart of citizens of the future an irreconcilable hostility to the enemies of our country, to prepare them to take up arms against those who assail our country's freedom

and independence. However, lessons in noble hatred will break little ground with those who have not learnt the lessons of kindness, sincerity and sensitivity. This is because courage is the supreme expression of human kindness, and hatred for the enemy is an expression of real humanity. Childhood and youth should become a school of kindness, humanity, and sensitivity. Only then will man's heart be able to embrace the whole range of noble human feelings—from sensitive tender concern for a mother to hatred for the enemy or uncompromising rejection of ideological opponents. (12, 187)

In order for a noble idea to take root in a man's mind, he must be provided with the rudiments of human culture. Man's thinking life is a life of ideas and reasoning steered by a sensitive heart. One of the basic principles of my approach to teaching is to foster in children's hearts and minds sensitivity to their fellow-men. Only he who cannot be indifferent to the joys and sorrows of the individual, whoever he might be, friend or stranger, can take close to heart the triumphs and setbacks of his country. (29)

The more a man learns about the world around him the more he should come to know about his fellow-men. A negligent attitude to the latter principle can disrupt the harmonious balance between knowledge and morality. This phenomenon I would refer to as moral igno-

rance. It finds expression in individuals who, while possessed of considerable knowledge concerning the world around them, are oblivious of the *human essence* in its historical, socio-political, intellectual or psychological, and aesthetic aspects. Without knowledge or without thought devoted to what places man above the animal world there can be no emotional development, and the individual's feelings will remain at a primitive level. (12, 176)

A humane vision of the world is not a natural gift but something attained through work and human relationships. Through work in which our emotions are involved, otherwise work loses its educative power. (12, 279)

How should we bring young people to the point where they do good deeds not in order to obtain praise and rewards but motivated by an innate need to do good? What does this need to do good consist in and what sets it in motion? There is no doubt that when fostering responsiveness, collective aspirations and objectives have a significant role to play. Yet shared experience should embrace profoundly personal aspects of every child's emotional and intellectual life.

I always endeavoured to ensure that all my pupils engaged in positive actions—helping their friends or other people in general—in response to inner urges and derived from such actions a deep sense of satisfaction. Probably this is one of the most difficult aspects of moral

education, namely teaching an individual to do good and at the same time avoid direct advice and pointers while doing this and telling children exactly what they should do. What approach is it best to adopt in practice? The most important thing is to foster those innate qualities in a child which enable him to do good, namely teach him to be sensitive to the needs and sorrows of other people. Yet how should we go about helping children who have witnessed the suffering of others to put themselves in other people's place, so that vivid imagination led to vivid emotions? How should we help a child to be able to transpose himself into someone else's position, into the life of someone who is subjected to suffering, to see and sense himself in another individual experiencing tragedy and grief? (10, 203)

I would recall hundreds of young children's answers to the question: "What kind of person do you want to be when you grow up?" The words strong, brave, clever, resourceful or fearless would recur time and time again . . . but no one ever said kind. Why is it that kindness is not listed among the other virtues such as courage and valour? Why are small boys even shame-faced about being seen as kind? Without kindness—true warmth of heart imparted from one individual to another—there can be no beauty of character. I pondered on the question as to why small boys undertake less kind actions than do small girls? Perhaps that was merely a false impression. On closer investigation

though it did prove to be the case. Small girls are kinder, more responsive and gentle because from a very early age an unconscious maternal instinct lives within them. Concern for life and those around takes root in a girl's heart long before she brings forth new life. The root and source of kindness lies in the creation and the affirmation of life and beauty. Goodness is inextricably linked with beauty. (10, 48)

Kind feelings must take root in early childhood, while humanity, kindness, gentleness and benevolence are nurtured in work, concern and involvement with the beauty of the surrounding world.

Kind feelings and emotional sensitivity are the focus of humanity. If kind feelings are not fostered in childhood they will never take root, for what is truly humane takes root in a man's mind at the same time as his apprehension of primary and fundamental truths, as his discovery and perception of the subtlest nuances of his native language. It is in childhood that the individual should pass through "emotional school", that kind feelings should be fostered. (10, 50)

Children's egoism can always be traced back to failure to foster emotional sensitivity. A child feels himself powerless in the face of evil which then appears to him as insuperable. Wherever this sense of powerlessness appears then thoughts of isolation take root. If a child devotes his deep feelings to other people then

he is not disturbed by the consideration that he is alone in his single combat with evil. (11, 180)

Fostering sensitivity and responsiveness to the sorrows and suffering of others is accorded considerable importance in Soviet schools. An individual can become a friend, comrade or brother to another, only if the suffering of another is viewed as his own. (10, 76)

*Each child should in his heart understand another person*—is a way of formulating the major educational task I set myself in this sphere. (10, 76)

It is very important that kind feelings and actions should not degenerate into showy “projects”. The teacher should go out of his way to see there is as little talk as possible about good deeds already carried out and be sparing with his allocation of praise. The most harmful situation of all arises when a child comes to see humane actions as deserts, or even exploits. More often than not the school is to blame. If a pupil finds a ten-kopeck piece and hands it to the teacher soon the whole class is talking about it. (10, 205)

The individual's cultural and educational background will be incomplete if he does not possess the knowledge which provides the foundation for *moral culture*. (12, 177)



The basic principles of morality only take root in a child's heart and mind if human relationships within the school collective are of an intrinsically moral variety. This is all very simple and yet very complex. It is simple so far as these relationships are always rooted in one and the same formula: each individual should behave towards every other as a fellow human being. It is all very complex insofar as human relationships should embrace all spheres of the individual's emotional and intellectual life and should embrace all members of the collective—teachers and pupils alike. (12, 10)

A schoolchild does not always do bad things because he has been taught to, but more often than not because he has not been taught to do good things. (2, 192)

We also drew up a programme of objectives in moral training. The habits we set out to foster were: seeing a task through to the end, trying to do it well and not just anyway; never to shift work on to other people or to make use of the fruits of other people's work; to help the old, weak and lonely regardless of whether they be friends or strangers; to ensure that one's desires are compatible with one's moral right to satisfy those desires; never to permit situations in which parents have to deprive themselves or combat difficulties in order to satisfy their child's desires; to ensure that personal joys, pleasures and entertainments never impede the fulfilment of others' needs, and that

one's joys never constituted worry or pain for other people; not to hide blameworthy actions, but bravely admit them to those who ought to know about them. (12, 197)

Just as a literate person reads a word without lingering over each letter, so an individual with a good grounding in morals does not require a logical explanation of the ideas, whose essence finds expression in a good deed. Yet just as letters have to be learnt before a word is read, so moral convictions require preliminary grounding in action, in positive moral habits. (11, 182)

Fostering moral habits does not require any special methods or techniques. They are an essential part of collectivist relations. A vital condition for successful moral education is that the main stimuli to behave and act well should be a child's own will and conscience. (12, 197)

If a teacher goes in for a good deal of discussion of good behaviour and exhortations, while providing no examples of such behaviour, the staff will soon be having to spend most of its energy on counteracting bad behaviour. . . . Teachers' mental energy and will-power will be taken up by determining who has done what and who is the culprit of each wrongdoing. . . . Wherever moral principles are not borne out in practice many will suffer and it will be exceedingly difficult to apportion blame. (33)

Now I shall outline how on the basis of action moral conviction can be fostered which demands respect for individuals' interests.

We teach our children to say what they really think about other people, actions, phenomena, events; never to try and say what you think people want you to say; the latter activity can make a child into a hypocrite, toady or quite simply a scoundrel.

We encourage our children; if you have seen injustice or deception perpetrated before your very eyes or a fellow-man's dignity slighted, and have felt filled with indignation and the urge to intervene and see justice done, while your reason prompted you to leave well alone then know that cowardice speaks within you; follow your initial impulses, for emotional reactions and the voice of conscience are usually the most positive. A cold calculating response to evil and injustice and dishonourable behaviour can make a person indifferent and heartless. . . .

If you have heard rumours about a person, an action or an event, do not repeat them parrot-fashion without giving thought to what you have heard. Form your own opinion and your own ideas about everything, but if you come to believe that what other people are saying is true then support it and stand up for it.

Do not forget what has to be accomplished today (homework, an assignment in the workshop or the school garden, or a project in a hobby group, etc.). On waking your first thought

should be of the work that has to be done that day. Never put off till tomorrow what has to be done today. Procrastination breeds laziness and disorderliness. In order to have a clear conscience try and do today even a tiny part of what has to be done tomorrow. Let that become a rule of your day-to-day life.

Knowledge should be sought after relying on one's own effort. It is dishonest to make use of the fruits of friends' and classmates' work. Copying other people's homework is the first step to sponging.

At the end of the day think about what you have done to bring joy and happiness to other people, and to become more intelligent, which also can bring joy to other people. If nothing comes to mind, this means that the day has been spent in vain and the next one must be distinguished by especial effort to make up for lost time.

When confronted by a model or instrument while in a laboratory or workshop, however well-made or impeccable it might be, try to make yours still better and remember that there is no limit, when it comes to skill and perfection in work.

If your friend is lagging behind in his studies or work teach him how to catch up. If you are not concerned by your friend's difficulties, this means that you must be callous by nature. The more warmth, kindness and concern you show him, the more joy will enter your life.

Do not leave what should be your work to your parents. Respect their work and their

leisure time and show this respect through your actions and behaviour. Your conscientious work or study will bring them joy. Do not deprive them of that joy. Do not disappoint them in any way. Do not let them make sure you have the best of everything. (11, 177-78)

The most precious and beautiful thing in each of our lives is our mother. It is very important that children should appreciate the "beauty" of work that brings joy to a mother. A fine tradition took root gradually in our collective: each autumn when the earth and work bring men such rich gifts, we would organise a special autumn festival for the pupils' mothers. Each pupil brought his mother something that day which he had achieved through his own work, something he had been looking forward to all the summer, if not for whole years at a stretch: apples, flowers, ears of corn grown on the tiny school plot (each child was given a special corner of the plot adjacent to his parents' house). As we made preparations for the autumn festival the idea we tried to get across to the small boys and girls was that they should take good care of their mothers. The more of their feeling each child put into his work to please his mother, the more room there would be for human kindness in his heart. (10, 211)

To love one's fellow-men is easier than to be kind to one's mother, we are reminded by the old Ukrainian proverb ascribed to the eighteenth-century philosopher Grigory Skovo-

roda. This maxim conceals a goodly piece of popular wisdom, for it is impossible to foster humane behaviour, if a person has never known what it is to be attached to someone and feel close to him. Talking about love for one's fellow-men is by no means the same thing as really loving them. The real school in which kindness, human warmth and responsiveness are nurtured is that of the family; relationships with a mother, father, grandfather and grandmother, brothers and sisters are the true test of humane feelings. (10, 212)

Care shown to a mother, grandmother, grandfather, younger brothers and sisters are no less important than a rich, full life within a collective. . . . We always tried to make sure that schoolchildren spent most of their time outside lessons at home, with their families, especially with their mothers. There is no need for young people always to be "kept occupied" or to lay on organised activities for them within the collective. At holiday times it is as well for children to be with their parents. (12, 188)

We also tried to help children to tailor their desires to match their parents' opportunities. Modesty makes young boys and girls renounce those material and cultural advantages, which their parents are ready to provide for them while often having to make sacrifices to that end. Encouraging modesty is one of the most important tasks in moral education. Modesty cannot be nurtured in isolation from other qualities: modesty and moderation are only

within reach of children for whom work has become a form of self-expression, part of their emotional and mental experience. (14, 12)

When a child comes to school, the range of his ideas, interests and feelings is bound up above all with his family, with what his parents, brothers and sisters do and say, with all that surrounds him at home in his garden and neighbourhood. At school his world outlook gradually broadens and he learns to know his country, its present, past and future. His social consciousness gradually takes shape.

A child comes to understand his parents' place in society . . . and he starts to take pride in his family and his parents' work, and he feels the need to express these feelings within his school collective. However for such feelings to grow and take deep root it is important for a teacher to bring a profound, constant and, what is particularly important, sensitive influence to bear on the mind of his charges. Sometimes their impressionable minds are seriously troubled by the fact that his father or mother has what he regards as serious weaknesses: a child tends to think that his parents are worse people than other children's and he is troubled even when the teacher so much as mentions them. Maintaining a sense of moderation and tact when talking to pupils about their parents is a very important aspect of a teacher's work. . . . Really good teachers appreciate that talking to a child about his parents can sometimes strengthen his love for his fam-

ily, and in others introduce tension into his relationship with his parents or fill him instead with mistrust for the teacher and wariness in relation to anything he might say. (4, 118)

In the vast majority of families children "discover" in their parents both positive and negative traits. This means that a teacher must be very subtle and thoughtful in his attempts to penetrate a child's emotional world. His mind must be moulded in such a way that he learn to distinguish between what is essential and what is of only secondary importance. . . . The best teachers help children to appreciate the social significance of the work their parents do. (4, 119)

Living within society means being able to forgo one's joys and pleasures for the sake of other people's welfare and peace of mind. Probably each one of us at some time has come up against a situation in which a child, known to be faced by sorrow, suffering and tears, is still absorbed in the pursuit of his usual pleasures. Indeed sometimes mothers try to distract their children's attention from all that is gloomy or sad so that they should not lose even a single drop from their cup of happiness. This attitude fosters sheer egoism. Do not hide all the gloomy aspects of human life from children; they should know that there are sorrows in life as well as joy. They should be made aware of and in their hearts understand the sorrows of others. (10, 77)



In order to become a harmonious, well-balanced personality a young child, boy or youth should be made to experience human suffering. Only then will he be able to understand other people correctly and be attentive towards them and only then can he be fearless. . . . True education is education in a spirit of fearlessness. True kindness and readiness to defend the weak and helpless means above all a brave and courageous spirit!

The precious kernel of the work involved in forging each individual's personality is moral courage! A child should be more willing to set his life at stake than to distort the truth or conceal lies, to turn his back on injustice and the humiliation of not only one individual but even the whole human race as well. *Uncompromising moral integrity* is what I see as the most important means for fostering humane qualities which should be nurtured and moulded in children from a very early age. (35)

If teachers succeed in nurturing moral integrity and fortitude in the hearts of their charges, then they will not only come to share your ideas and endeavours but in their turn will educate you! Do not be alarmed at this! True communist education finds expression in a situation in which not only the teacher educates those who look to him for an example, but in which the latter educate the teacher as well. To my creative work I devote my emotional energy which is then restored to me as it were. (31)

Lessons in integrity and moral fortitude, and in the loyalty to one's convictions are paths along which the young citizen can move nearer to the summits of moral maturity. (31)

The ability to grow angry and indignant, to despise and hate, to be impatient and intolerant of evil I see as commendable qualities which constitute the core of moral uprightness, integrity and fortitude. How important it is that young hearts should not grow callous! I cannot envisage any worthwhile moral education that did not enable a young child's or adolescent's heart to tremble with pain or anger at the sight of callousness, indifference, flouting of his people's supreme interests, and slighting of any of his compatriots' dignity; I cannot envisage a situation in which worthy indignation in face of evil would not inspire a person to behave honourably.

My first concern was to lead each of my pupils through the struggle for the triumph of truth, good and beauty. I tried to help my young charges to be more than faceless ciphers, to have something to say for themselves and to stand up for what they knew to be right; if I achieve this then each of my pupils will be a *great*, real person. The greatness of an individual should be measured in terms of his civic conscience, his uncompromising integrity and sense of responsibility. The triumph of *truth for all men* should come to represent the cornerstone of a person's happiness and well-being even in childhood. (30)

The following figures provide a picture of the careers of the boys and girls who passed through our school.

Between 1949 and 1966 712 pupils completed their secondary education at Pavlysh. Of this total 278 went on to graduate from various institutes and universities: 94 engineers, 45 doctors, 49 agricultural specialists, 53 teachers, and 37 other specialists. Another 183 are at present engaged in further education (60 training to be engineers, 22 as doctors, 38 as teachers, 36 to specialise in agriculture and 27 elsewhere). The remainder are engaged in industrial or agricultural production: 73 machine operators, 116 technicians, mechanics and skilled workers, 62 are farm technicians and livestock breeders. Of this last group 68 are working in the local collective farm as machine operators, mechanics, farm technicians and livestock breeders. (11, 331)

### **Compatibility of Convictions and Actions**

Convictions by their very nature cannot be passive. They live, grow stronger and evolve only in the context of meaningful action. . . . Through his work and the relationships he makes within the collective each young person should strive to prove or uphold something, so as together with the true principle in question to forge his own sense of dignity and honour. Such is the real struggle of ideas. . . . It is important to help each young person to find

scope to put his convictions to the test: this I saw as an important aspect of the teacher's individualised approach to his work. More often than not work activities provided this scope . . . . When ideas are borne out in a work context then work comes to be an essential part of man's life. (12, 206)

Communist convictions take root in the process of our people's active drive to build communism. This drive facilitates the concentration of all men's mental and physical energy on the attainment of inspiring objectives that ennoble all who work towards them. Work is the activity in which the harmonious unity of physical, mental, moral, intellectual and volitional energies finds its most vivid expression. Creative communist labour aimed at transforming society leads to boundless possibilities for the transformation of each individual involved. Work, which in society founded on exploitation remains a burden and curse, has in our society become synonymous with life itself and is carried out in the name of noble, elevating ideas. (7, 14)

Proper education encourages and develops independence and initiative in the moral sphere which lead to a sound aspiration towards high moral standards in the individual's private life. (8, 105)

One of the most important features of true morality is, from the point of view of pupils, modesty. They regard as truly moral a man

who, while aware of his own human dignity, is at the same time ready to respect that of others, and in all circumstances observes a *sense of fairness and equality* in his relationships with other people. We present great men to our pupils—above all revolutionaries and outstanding public figures—as simple, humane individuals possessed of noble human feelings and passions. Examples of striking modesty taken from the life of Lenin represent for our pupils the ideal which they will always try to emulate. (8, 106)

We try to get the following very important idea across to our pupils: the limitless devotion of a Communist to his idea is not merely some blind fanaticism, but stems from a profound knowledge of the laws and patterns governing the real world. Communists, who laid down their lives for that ideal, endured inhuman torment and deprivation, represent for our pupils in view of their embracing of this ideal not sufferers or figures who call men to sacrifice, but heroes who continue the fight even after death in the sense that their heroism inspires new generations to follow in their footsteps. (8, 96)

Soviet schools educate men and women who are ready to uphold mankind's supreme ideals — Peace, Labour, Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood and Happiness for all peoples. Yet this fight to attain men's highest social ideals does not mean that the individual should renounce

his own personal happiness. It would be profoundly wrong to see the efforts of the Soviet people to attain supreme social ideals as nothing but self-sacrifice or renunciation. Communism is social good in the name of the welfare of each individual. Soviet men and women deliberately go out of their way to overcome difficulties stemming from the objective world in which they live. Yet there are no difficulties which man would wish to endure. The pride of the victor who overcomes problems stems precisely from the knowledge that by mustering his physical and mental energy he has done everything possible to make the lives and work of his fellow-men easier. (9, 4)

The social, political and moral principles on which society is based are all important with regard to the happiness of each individual within society. However an awareness of a full cultural, intellectual and moral life, which is essential to personal happiness, is achieved not only by bringing about the material well-being of society, but also by fostering ideals, interests, needs, inclinations, abilities and enthusiasms for each individual member of that society. (9, 4)

Apprehension of truth is only the beginning of education for the essence of moral education consists in imparting moral and political ideals to all pupils who assimilate them as their own and come to regard them as rules and standards for behaviour. This process is possible only in a context of *meaningful intellectual*

*activity* without which there can be no striving towards the ideal, and no creative individuals. (12, 199)

Intellectual activity is not some kind of introvert self-analysis divorced from everyday work. It is creative work, dynamic social activity ennobled by a lofty goal. Intellectual activity is the reflection of social relations, including labour relations, in man's inner world, in his predilections and aspirations, in his desires. I repeat in his *desires*. A Man in the full sense of that word is one in whose mind there arise and take root worthy desires which influence behaviour, prompt passions and actions, in which man asserts himself again, and which give rise to still new desires. This complex process is what we in practical teaching refer to as the individual's intellectual life. . . . One of the golden rules to be followed by teachers of teenage pupils is to encourage as far as possible acts prompted by noble desires and aspirations to moral ideal. (12, 200)

To us teachers is entrusted the great and honourable mission of imparting noble ideals to our pupils, and in such a way that the spirit of their people be mirrored in miniature in their minds and hearts. Those who achieve this can say with every justification that they have achieved the ultimate goal of the educator. (17)

From childhood a man should be encouraged to see the world in the light of an ideal so that

his life should become a gradual ascent towards the ideal summit. An ideal is not a truth learnt by rote, which an individual can pronounce when called upon, but his heart-felt striving towards truth, justice and beauty. (29)

Young people are astutely aware of the moral significance of each undertaking proposed to them or each act that is perpetrated. If you tell boys and girls to go out in cold autumn weather to dig up beetroot, without explaining why they should put up with the unpleasant working conditions, their response will be one of unwilling indifference. The purpose and moral implications of work to be engaged in are always important to teenagers. If they realise that their efforts are required to make up for someone else's negligence and bad organisation then the work in question loses all educational significance. Only collectives already possessed of high morale can be rallied together to embark energetically on correcting bad work which results from other people's laziness and negligence. In such cases the goal to be aimed at is not only a set work target, but a moral victory over bitterness, laziness, negligence, indifference and selfishness. Only then can the knowledge that difficulties have been overcome enhance pupils' view of their own achievement. (11, 183)

Some teachers hold that it is ill-advised to talk to children about loafers, good-for-nothings and embezzlers of the people's wealth. Yet



I for one am fundamentally opposed to this view. Attempts to create round a child some sort of sterilised world where no evil is thought or enacted only serve to distort a child's mind.

The real world should never be presented to children through rose-coloured spectacles. It is wrong that children should hear one kind of talk in frank, outspoken conversation with his friends or at home from members of his family, and should be presented with very different views in official surroundings. A child should not be encouraged in this way to become hypocritical and act against his conscience. . . . (11, 208)

In our school we attempt to fill the children's lives with a spirit of frank honesty, an uncompromising rejection of evil and deceit, falsehood and eye-wash. We go out of our way to convince pupils that all men from collective-farm night watchmen to Ministers are equal before the only real truth—that contained in communist ideals. We make every effort to ensure that that truth should be the only prism through which the children gaze upon all the phenomena of the real world and the moral stature of all men. (11, 209)

From an early age we stress to our pupils. . . the idea that the results of their work, especially in the fields, depend not only on man but on the elemental forces of Nature as well. The pupils are reminded that they should only regard as to their credit what they achieve with their own

hands, thanks to their own powers of reason, their own creativity and not take credit for what Nature gives them; keeping these rules helps them to reject all that is false or merely outward show. So as to ensure an objective assessment of their work, diligence and effort, special work assignments are selected, in which the most important element is overcoming obstacles and difficulties. Growing a good crop on fertile soil is no particular achievement, but if a pupil succeeds in turning barren soil into fertile soil, then the fruits of his labour incorporate intellectual effort and the search for solutions to a problem and he sets store by them. In the light of this it often happens that praise and commendation are accorded to pupils whose crops are relatively small, rather than those who gathered a large crop. (11, 210)

Words (persuasion) and training (exercise) are not consecutive stages in the educational process, in the course of which (as is usually explained in connection with methods recommended for *moral* education) activities consolidate the standards already assimilated and consolidate those moral habits already pursued. At all stages of pupils' emotional and intellectual development practical activity should be closely linked up with exposition of political ideas and moral standards, which incorporate the concept of *Soviet patriotism*. Only if this combination is achieved are social views and convictions . . . recognised and experienced by pupils as profoundly moral. (4, 6)

Some pupils may well lack any outstanding abilities and long before leaving school realise that they are not going to be scientists, engineers or transformers of Nature, however they should never be allowed to feel themselves as mediocrities. Each person, however ordinary his talents and abilities, can become in our society a creative individuality and make his contribution to communist construction. Boundless scope for expression of that creative individuality is provided by his civic role, his opportunities for labour feats for the good of the people. A noble and difficult task of our schools is to explain and present to each pupil his prospects for personal fulfilment. (9, 107)

The breadth and scope of pupils' intellectual and emotional experience determine the effectiveness of the two basic methods of moral education—*persuasion and training*. The art of moral education . . . consists in making sure that a pupil from his earliest days at school is convinced first and foremost by his *own actions*, that his teacher's words echo his own thoughts and experiences which also take shape in the process of activity. Rich intellectual and emotional experience begins where worthy thoughts and moral sentiments merge as one and find expression in moral acts. We encourage pupils to carry out actions of a markedly moral character. This method of moral education we refer to as *encouragement of active expression of ideas and feelings*. (6, 14)

To prove while learning and to learn while proving—such is the unity of thought and work in which there finds expression the successful combination of intellectual training and world outlook. A child sees in the results of his work not only material values, but himself—his perseverance, his will-power. It is very important that this active view of the world should be acquired at a very young age so that a pupil might enter his teens with firmly established convictions. (11, 225)

It is not necessary to encourage children to express high-flown sentiments; they should not be taught to pour forth impassioned feelings when concrete circumstances do not demand strong emotional reactions. Frequent practice in the expression of such emotions can breed bombastic habits, unprincipled tongue wags, and word-happy demagogues, and in the long run men and women characterised by callous indifference to the world around them. For instance, we do not allow Young Pioneers when greeting adults on ceremonial functions to speak of things which they do not clearly understand, which they themselves have not experienced. Children should only speak about things which mean much to them and not give voice to those ideas which adults wish to express through their words. (11, 195)

Convictions cannot exist if they do not find expression in action. (7, 166)

An individual for whom a revolutionary scientific-materialist world outlook has become personal conviction, and in whose life and activity prime importance is accorded to the Marxist-Leninist world outlook will become active in social affairs, regardless of the kind of work he will do or of the post he will occupy. His role in social progress is determined not by his position or occupation but by the moral implications and objectives of his activity. (7, 12)

### **The World of Ideas Unfolds to Children after They Enter Their Teens**

When pondering about my pupils after working hours I often used to think to myself that adolescence is like a second birth. The first time a living being is brought forth, and the second time a citizen, an active, thinking individual, who is aware not merely of the world around him but also of himself. When he first enters the world man announces himself with a cry: here I am, take care of me, look after me, I am helpless, don't forget about me for a moment, shield me, sit with bated breath at my cradle. When born a second time man addresses the world in quite different terms: do not protect me, do not follow me or watch my every step, do not wrap me in the nappies of supervision or mistrust, never remind me of my cradle. I am an independent person. I do not want to be led by the hand. Before me there stands a high mountain. It is the goal of my

life: I behold it, think about it, wish to reach it, and I am going to climb that peak on my own. . . . I need the support of an older friend. I shall reach the summit, if I lean on the shoulder of a strong and wise man. Yet I am afraid or ashamed to say this. I want you all to think that I can reach the summit on my own, relying on my own resources. That is what a young teenager would say if he were able to put into words what was of immediate concern to him, and—still more important—if he wanted to talk about all that openly. (12, 65)

Before I started work with my pupils of this age group I had heard a great deal about the difficulties of work with such classes. I had been told that it was easy to work with young children, while as soon as children reach their teens they change beyond recognition. I was warned that their kindness, sensitivity and shyness disappear and are replaced by coarse abruptness and indifference. Later I was to realise how wrong those words were. Good impulses are only absent in those teenagers who never knew them, if their teachers in primary classes had gone by the principle that children are endowed or not as the case may be with kindness by Nature. If a child is not encouraged from an early age to love books, if reading has not become an emotional need that will last throughout his life, then a teenager will be empty-headed and bad characteristics will come to light, that seem to spring from nowhere. (10, 175)

While *the world of things*—their essence, their causal links and dependences—provide the main source of a child's intellectual and emotional experience in his early years, in adolescence it is *the world of ideas* which opens up before him. To fathers and mothers it seems strange, incomprehensible, even hurtful that their son as it were forgets the cradle, from which he first glimpsed the sun and sky, and forgets the mother's breast at which he sucked. Yet this shift of interest and preoccupation reflects the complex contradictory process at work in the teenager's mind; against the broad background of social life, family, home, cradle and mother's love suddenly appear to the teenager as petty and insignificant. Even his own "sins"—violations of accepted norms of behaviour—appear to him as unimportant in comparison to world problems.

Teenagers begin to philosophise—to think in terms of broad socio-political and moral concepts. Everything going on in the world is of immediate concern to him as an individual. Do not let this take you by surprise, teachers of such pupils: profound interest in other people is the distinctive characteristic of young people at this period. (12, 172)

It is very important to the teenager that the world he embraces in his mind should not be a narrow sheltered one or limited to his home. The further an adolescent's view of the world reaches, the more ideas and emotions are aroused in him by things distant which he does

not come into contact with in his everyday life, the more subtle, considerate and sensitive will be his socially committed view of his village, his work, his friends, relatives and dear ones, and lastly of himself. If a teenager is moved by something happening in the foothills of the Pamirs, he will also take to heart what is happening in his native village. (12, 211)

Adolescence is remarkable for the fact that the individual not only *discovers* his fellow-men (this small children do as well), but also *goes out in search of them*. (12, 215)

Teenagers experience the need to share with their fellows not only impressions of what they have seen (something small children like to do as well), but also ideas born of generalisations and conclusions they have reached. While small children communicate with each other mainly in the course of games and work, and tell each other mainly about fairy stories and vivid adventures from books they have read, an important place in contacts between teenagers is gradually occupied by exchanges of ideas that incorporate generalisations and definitions. (6, 130)

Many pupils of this age group develop the habit of arguing at every opportunity, whenever they glimpse a chance of exercising their powers of reason. There is nothing regrettable about this; efforts to develop teenagers' speech habits should consist in directing their thought



processes along correct channels, to improve immature, imperfect speech of the adolescent and achieve a correctly patterned expression of ideas. (6, 131)

I often went out of my way to maintain *an atmosphere of debate* in my class. . . . This atmosphere builds up thanks to the fact that the pupils, while pondering over and analysing facts, as it were, step back from the latter and catch sight of the central problem. . . . Teenage pupils find it interesting to examine contradictions and work out their own viewpoint. Theirs is not a detached approach to knowledge as something merely to be assimilated, they are fighters with a distinct goal in view. I saw my role of the teacher to present factual material with all its controversial implications, to encourage debate. Controversial discussion brings emotional enrichment to children's thought processes: teenagers take definite interest in the underlying connections between facts. . . . Events from the distant past are apprehended and re-lived by them as if they related to the present; characters from literature come to represent for them like-minded friends or ideological opponents. (12, 204)

The ability to form his own opinion of everything he sees around him, particularly of other people, is a stage in the teenager's mental development which to a large extent determines his new ideas, experiences, emotions and pre-occupations, that may well appear unexpected

to teachers or parents. While reading a novel a teenager may encounter thoughts on life and death which will suddenly thrust upon him the idea, that he too has to die. This thought often gives rise to confusion and in many cases even mental suffering. I knew a boy who upon this realisation experienced a severe nervous trauma. For several days he just sat in the classroom completely indifferent to everything around him. It seemed strange and incomprehensible to him that the people around him had forgotten that they would die; it bewildered him to see that they were able to go peacefully about their work, to enjoy themselves and pay heed to insignificant everyday affairs. (12, 69)

Teenage pupils start to take particularly keen interest in passages from works of fiction treating emotional and intellectual contact between individuals, questions of devotion and loyalty. This is the age when young people start making notes, collecting extracts, expressions and definitions from literature, which appear to them particularly apt or expressive. An indication of the important role of mental and emotional activity in the lives of teenagers is the habit of keeping diaries. Thoughts, ideas and convictions are noted down not to be memorised, or for future use, but merely as a means of affirming the truth and correctness of their ideas. (6, 126)

It is quite wrong to "feed" teenagers with childish maxims such as admonitions not to be

late for lessons, carefully to do all their homework, etc. There are important duties for a schoolchild, but no foundation for a wealth of ideas and no source of inspiration; these duties do not provide sufficiently wide scope for teenagers to try out their new-found strength and to overcome difficulties and finally to work out their convictions. For convictions to take shape, such pupils require rich food for thought. If a boy or girl in their teens adopts an irresponsible attitude to study, this means that there is no spark of inspiration in his or her life which might add colour to everyday tasks, there is no involvement in real "grown-up" affairs. (12, 225)

To use Belinsky's idea, it is precisely at this period that young people should "investigate and interrogate the past" so that it might help them to understand the present and look into the future. Education with a historical perspective is a vital step on the path to moral self-education. At no other stage does an individual experience so deeply his sense of duty to his Homeland, as at the time when he ponders over his country's destiny and in his own thoughts retreads the path his people has followed and comes to sense himself as part of that people. (12, 212)

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During their teens I set my charges to collecting material on the participation in the Great Patriotic War by men from their village. The boys and girls brought priceless trea-

tures to school from their homes—yellowed photographs of heroes, their neighbours or relatives. They made large portraits of the heroes and placed them in a special memorial room. . . . (12, 214)

A particularly deep impression was made on these teenage pupils by stories in which ideas assumed living form as it were: such themes as man and society, freedom and oppression, happiness and sorrow, social progress and reaction. (12, 173)

When trying to convey moral and political ideals in all their grandeur I was always afraid lest these pupils might read reproach between the lines of my stories to the effect that real people act like this while their behaviour was of a quite different order. . . . Even the slightest hint in this direction brings intellectual activity, that is essential to the formations of ideals, to an abrupt halt: young hearts would be filled with a lack of confidence in their own capacity, hesitation, a sense of their own futility and the fruitlessness of their efforts directed towards self-education and the inaccessibility of ideal goals. Yet teenagers are never prepared to reconcile themselves to the idea of their own insignificance. Instead they are filled with a sense of protest, inner protest that fills their whole being. They cease to believe in what you tell them, the great and noble ideals can be pulled down from their heroic pedestal. It is here that the seeds of cynicism lie. Intellectual

and moral enrichment is impossible for pupils robbed of a sense of their own dignity. A vivid picture of an ideal life, of the inspiration to be drawn from moral exploits, should not blind the teenager but on the contrary light up the path he needs to follow, *bring into relief* what is good and what is regrettable in his own feelings and ideas. Precisely this is what needs to be done—lighting up the path to a young heart's ideal, and turning such a heart "inside out" should be avoided at all costs. (12, 203)

One of the main reasons for problems in the education of pupils in their teens stems from the fact that there is no way of disguising efforts to train and mould character, for by this age boys and girls do not like to feel that they are being deliberately "brought up". (11, 8)

When they sense disrespect for their personal dignity on the part of their elders teenagers often react with stubborn or coarse behaviour. Nothing could be worse than efforts to break such obstinacy, to quell such insubordination. Such efforts offend, and even embitter adolescents and give rise to situations where they deliberately start to act in defiance of the reasonable demand of discipline. Teenagers resent particularly bitterly constant reminders from their parents or teachers of the weaknesses in their character of which they are either to some extent aware, or are even trying to combat. Deliberate emphasis of these shortcomings and in particular ironic treatment of the same cause

teenagers deep regret and sometimes even despair. On the other hand if these weaknesses are regarded with tolerance teenagers will themselves mobilise their inner resources in order to eradicate these negative traits from their character. (6, 132)

Teenagers do not accept unquestioningly all they are told by teachers or parents, as do small children; they do not accept all they hear without a murmur. Indeed, they seem deliberately to seek for arguments which refute what they are told. . . . An important condition for the positive evolution of the adolescent's critical spirit is not only satisfaction but also all manner of encouragement for his inquisitiveness and thirst for knowledge. . . . (6, 119-20)

A sign of teenagers' developing mental capacities is their need for decisive final answers to questions and for exhaustive proofs that do not admit of ambiguity.

This need comes particularly clearly to the fore in relation to questions bearing on causal relationships in social affairs: when confronted by incomplete ideas such pupils tend to suspect deliberate attempts to conceal the truth from them and this to some extent explains their wariness, the critical spirit in which they sometimes react to explanations of subjects of deep concern to them. (6, 122)

A feature of the teenager's intellectual development is expressed in the fact that he can-

not reconcile himself with any vagueness or incompleteness in evaluations of various phenomena. He needs comprehensive and explicit definitions. This explains why teenagers' own opinions are distinguished by extreme explicitness, which should not be interpreted as an expression of exaggerated self-confidence. On the contrary, through his categorical opinions a teenager often tries to conceal his doubts, his lack of confidence; his emotional activity sometimes serves to compensate for intellectual uncertainty. Categorical expressions provide the teenager with an instrument for asserting the correctness of his ideas. (6, 123)

Certain teachers hold that teenagers are as a rule unwilling to admit their errors or to try and correct their mistakes, yet this is a superficial impression. Pupils are only trying to show that they are standing by their principles. Meanwhile in actual fact their minds are hard at work searching for correct answers. Careful observation of teenagers has shown that they take their mistakes very much to heart and in view of the fact that at this age they have a heightened sense of their own dignity it would be wrong to demand from them sober, thoughtful criticism of their own opinions.

Through his mental activity the teenager endeavours not merely to show what he is thinking and what kind of opinions he has, but—and this is particularly important—he is also trying *to convince himself of the correctness of his opinions*. . . . This incidentally also serves to

explain the growing need experienced by pupils of this age to find complete correspondence between words and deeds (a need which can often lead them to make mistakes), and for straightforward directness of arguments, bordering on abruptness. (6, 123)

The following *contradictions* reveal particularly clearly the nature of the intellectual and emotional experience of teenage boys and girls and the way in which their moral self-assertion takes place: a deep urge to make resolute efforts towards self-education side by side with a mistrustful attitude to concrete techniques of self-education recommended by teachers; impressionable sensitivity to moral assessments of their own character by the collective and the urge to appear indifferent to such assessments and to act without reference to others' advice; aspirations after ideals and high principles in important matters (duty towards one's country and a spirit of sacrifice) and unprincipled behaviour in relation to trivial matters (such as covering up a friend who has committed a misdemeanour); respect for the power and potential of science, reason and skill side by side with a predilection for crafty questions aimed at refuting long established truths, propositions and laws of science; the urge to analyse each fact, phenomenon, event, and a fear of hasty conclusions side by side with a youthful bent for superficial generalisations from isolated facts, particularly with regard to social relations



and emotional problems; romantic urges, dreams, visions of lofty goals side by side with a definitely practical, down-to-earth, almost prosaic preoccupation with detail; the urge to appear grown-up, deliberate emphasis of those aspects in one's behaviour modelled on adults side by side with the first pangs of nostalgia in the emotional key of reminiscences linked with childhood and the realisation of the fact that childhood is past and the regret experienced as a result of that realisation; profound faith in the good inherent in man side by side with a tendency to exaggerate certain negative characteristics in close friends and relatives; inquisitiveness, thoughtfulness, a capacity for concentrated brainwork side by side with absent-mindedness, disorderliness, tolerance for poorly organised things and disorder; aspiration after moral ideals and unconditional emulation of idealised heroes in every respect, even in insignificant details, side by side with a fear of appearing dependent on others and a view of all imitation as a sign of moral weakness; contempt for rote-learning side by side with an urge to remember word for word meaningful expressions and sayings; marked seriousness side by side with a boundless capacity for merriment; a sense of pride in one's intellectual abilities or even exaggerated view of the latter side by side with efforts at self-debasement and efforts to convince themselves that they know absolutely nothing, etc.; bravery, contempt of danger side by side with shyness, awkwardness, particularly in situations where activity is per-

force of an exclusively intellectual or emotional character; exaggerated irritability at times when self-control is required, side by side with deliberate restraint at times when intellectual and moral assessments can be conveyed most vividly of all through the expression of profound feeling; trustfulness side by side with wariness; sincerity, frankness, profound emotional and intellectual communication with each other, side by side with reserve and inhibitions in relations with those dearest of all, with fathers and mothers; gentle tenderness side by side with cold curtness or artificially stern words; deliberate and discriminating interest in a specific branch of knowledge and type of work activity side by side with an urge to know everything and reproach themselves with ignorance; sensitivity, responsiveness and uncompromising rejection of callous heartlessness, side by side with a fear of being too open in their compassion and sympathy (particularly in boys), so as not to be thought "soft"; optimism, zest for life and intolerant attitudes towards dejection, side by side with a strange feeling of satisfaction derived from a gentle, almost lyrical variety of melancholy (which often finds expression in diaries); the urge to decide their future while still at school, side by side with a constant expectation of something new and unknown; an awareness of their strength and potential side by side with an urge to engage in such activities as are outside their capacities; fortitude side by side with a tendency to exaggerate personal setbacks and sorrow.

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It is important to show understanding for the attempts made by adolescents, sometimes very inept or almost funny, from an adult point of view, to assert their will. Teenagers do not embark immediately on a task or project, as is the case with young pupils whom a teacher has succeeded in motivating. However much the activity before them might seem inspiring they like to think about whether or not it is worth doing what the teacher is calling upon them to do; at first glance it might even appear sometimes that they are showing unwillingness to work (sometimes this impression stems from their ironic remarks about their particular role in the project ahead). Some teachers lose control of themselves when pupils behave in this way, and they are convinced that the teenagers are merely putting their patience to the test. In actual fact, however, this hesitation betrays no hard feeling towards the teacher or the work they are about to embark on. Pupils in this age group merely derive pleasure from contemplation of the link between the work in hand and their volition, their efforts of will. (6, 109)

Particular care is required of teachers during the final period of children's school careers, for children in their late teens, a time of a deeply pondered attitude to the surrounding world, to their own life and activity, a time coloured by a sense of the fullness of life and the flowering of their physical and intellectual innate qualities, and an awareness of the vistas of a rich, full-blooded and meaningful life opening up

before them, a time when noble emotions of love and devotion are experienced together with dreams and plans for the future. . . .

The all-important aspect of intellectual and emotional development at this period is a young person's world outlook, his deliberate endeavour to lend his acts and his general behaviour motivation based on a clearly defined view of the world. (6, 38)

The children in the last classes at school are of an age when their moral and intellectual potential is assuming definite shape. They show a predilection then to indulge in profound analysis of facts and draw general conclusions from the latter. An offshoot of that predilection is incidentally mistrust and frequent objections to what they hear and are told. It is difficult to judge from the facial expressions and outward behaviour of such young adults what they are really thinking, what is really going on in their minds. This characteristic of school-leavers places special demands on the teacher as he presents these pupils with material. It is important to select material for such pupils that provides maximum scope for analysis, deliberation, argument and debate. . . . Boys and girls at this stage are not carried away and inspired by heroic exploits in such a straightforward way as are small children and pupils in their early teens. They are attempting in their mind's eye to put themselves in the place of the heroes the teacher is telling them about. . . . When speaking of heroes to pupils in the senior

classes the teacher should always bear in mind that the pupil is not only thinking about the hero, but about himself as well. (3, 43)

While in material for young pupils facts should speak for themselves, for those in senior classes it is essential that it should make a direct appeal to their minds and powers of analysis. Those engaged in practical teaching are profoundly mistaken when they presume that pupils in the senior classes adopt a contemptuous attitude towards so-called "general statements". Pupils of this age group scorn empty words, but intelligent words are of profound interest for them. . . . (3, 44)

Young people in their late teens adopt a new approach to categorical judgements: these start to give way more and more to hypothetical propositions (loosely lumped together by adults under the heading of "philosophising") and demonstrability of this or that hypothesis is judged according to the difficult choices between contradictory ideas to be made as it is being substantiated. In practice this new approach finds expression in the following interesting pattern: the more effort involved in demonstrating a particular truth the more profound a pupil's belief in it. (6, 174)

Boys and girls in their late teens subject to particularly profound analysis questions linked with social relations and the individual's inner world. . . . Their attention is captured by ques-

tions such as the objective nature of historical events and the role of the individual in history; the correlation between the personal and the social, between rights and duties; the link between the concepts of happiness and duty, discipline and freedom; man's endeavour to reach a closer understanding of himself. (6, 175)

### **Nothing in This World Is More Interesting Than Man Himself**

The humanities and knowledge of the same should be regarded not merely as a specific part of the school programme and the store of knowledge essential for everyone, but also as an important factor promoting the individual's overall development and facilitating the acquisition of knowledge of Nature and pupil's understanding of the processes involved in their own intellectual work, a factor that exerts a distinct influence on the individual. In this connection it would seem quite impermissible to neglect such subjects as logic and psychology, as is the practice at present. (6, 177)

It is no exaggeration to say that youth is an age of criticism. The criticism encountered among boys and girls in their late teens is characterised by its active and uncompromising nature. . . . The harshest criticism of all is meted out to such weaknesses as lack of principle, irresolute convictions, kowtowing, a loss of human dignity, individualism, efforts on the

part of individuals to set themselves up against the collective, laziness, cowardice, bragging, conceit, and obtrusiveness. (6, 193)

Like children in their early teens children approaching school-leaving age have their distinct moral ideal that is embodied in living models, in real people. While for the first group this ideal may be based on the moral qualities of one concrete individual, senior pupils tend to create in their imagination an ideal hero who as it were unites within himself all the moral qualities they admire. They do not endow him with concrete characteristics: their mental image consists above all in moral qualities, feelings and ideas, it is an ideal picture of what a person should be. . . .

The ideal hero envisaged by boys and girls of this age group is characterised first and foremost by moral purity. (6, 182-83)

People who value truth above all else provide models which young people should emulate. It is no coincidence that children in their late teens regard acceptance of false ideas as renegade apostasy: this moral approach to intellectual integrity is explained by the positive influence of the moral ideal. (6, 185)

For our pupils in their late teens this moral ideal is embodied in the Communist. . . . The attributes of the Communist are the criteria by which they judge their own moral fibre. (6, 185)



Among the senses, through which senior pupils deliberately test and strengthen their conscience, their *sense of right* is that which runs deepest. Awareness of this feeling for what is right and resolute efforts to pay no heed to anything else except the voice of their own conscience are not only recognised as morally upright but also provide a source of joy. My experience of the behaviour of senior pupils has confirmed that the knowledge they are right and resolute rejection of all attempts to involve them in moral compromise, and finally their moral victory in this situation, all serve to give them a sense of moral satisfaction and strengthen their sense of their own dignity. (6, 201)

It is wrong to persuade senior pupils to go against the promptings of their sense of reason, to demand that they acknowledge their guilt where they see none, or to advise them to condemn what they do not see as wrong, or to recommend to them actions which they inwardly reject. Pupils should not only carry their consciences unsallied through their teens, but also realise that they are capable of standing firm in the struggle to defend moral purity and noble communist ideas. (6, 202)

The pure and ennobling quality of young love depends, of course, on kind words, guidance and wise advice imparted from outside during formative years, but still more so on the inner life of a young person, his intellectual

interests, his needs and moral requirements and on how deeply within the school collective the most important moral principle of our society, namely the idea that the most precious thing in life is Man himself, has taken root. (12, 224)

If a teacher is anxious for a pupil to understand and sense the beauty of ennobling moral and political ideas (such as loyal devotion to his Homeland, his patriotic and social duties and the struggle for communism) then it is vital to this end to help him understand and cherish the beauty of deep personal feelings. If these are not pure, purity of civic feeling is unthinkable. (12, 225)

Makarenko in a discussion with fellow-teachers once remarked that teachers at all times and among all peoples have always hated love. In that jocular comment there is a grain of truth: some teachers do not appreciate that senior pupils are already men and women and that sexual attraction is a natural part of their lives. It also tends to be overlooked that the sexual attractions experienced by young people in their teens are coloured by quite different emotions from those which characterise sexual attraction between adults. In an atmosphere of a rich and full intellectual and emotional life the intimate essence of the relationships between these boys and girls is bound up with idealised, pure and noble impulses.... The objective basis of their mutual attraction is sexual instinct, yet these boys and girls would

be deeply hurt if they were openly told about it. (12, 233)

Pupils in their early teens react particularly violently to what they see as interference on the part of adults in the inviolate world of feelings. The art of respecting and understanding young love—that self-centred world inhabited by two people—is a very important condition for achieving harmonious contact between the minds and feelings of adult teachers and teenage pupils. (12, 223)

In my view it is essential to put a stop to tactless, unnecessary conversations about love between pupils that so often go on at school. There should be nothing said about who has fallen in love with whom. . . . Love should always remain throughout life something the individual holds sacred and sees as intimately precious. (12, 223)

The task of the school should be to protect children in face of all that is filthy and corrupt in the world of emotions and to counter immoral influences. There are no special educational techniques for nurturing a deeply moral view of love. The latter depends on whether or not and in how far moral convictions take root which are founded in communist morality, in the whole activity of the collective. (6, 167)

It is strange and incomprehensible why during the formative years at school the individual is not provided with any knowledge about him-

self, about man and in particular those specific characteristics which set him apart from the animal world: knowledge of the human mind, the thought process and consciousness, the emotional, aesthetic, volitional and creative spheres of our mental life. The fact that the individual knows virtually nothing about himself often leads to disaster, for which society has to pay a heavy price. Proper physical, moral, and aesthetic make-up is unthinkable without a grounding in the sphere of psychology. I always tried to give my pupils in their early teens elementary essential knowledge of what is specific to man's nature and impart to them the ability to make use of that knowledge in life, at work and in their relationships with other people. (12, 108)

Knowledge of the culture of the mind is not just potted psychology. I would refer to it rather as knowledge of the basic principles of self-knowledge and maturity, of the individual's emotional life. (12, 108)

I was once asked by a colleague at school when and where discussion of the human mind should be conducted for there was no room for it in the time-table. . . . I would discuss such questions outside school hours while out walking with the children or while sitting in the garden during quiet evenings, or even in classrooms after lessons when pupils in their early teens would come and beg me to tell them something interesting and gather together specially

for that purpose. Nothing in this world is more interesting than man himself. (12, 112)

The complex process involved in the formation of moral convictions for young people finds expression in their growing need for self-knowledge. . . . The school's task in relation to senior pupils coming to grips with this problem is not simply to educate but also *to involve them in the process of self-education*, and far more so than is necessary in the case with pupils only in their early teens. (6, 188)

### **Guidance in Self-Education**

For many years now I have been wondering to myself where the results of education find their most vivid expression. When am I morally justified in saying that my efforts have borne fruit? Experience has shown me that the first and only tangible result of education finds expression in the fact that an individual has started to think for himself and started to work out what good and bad there is within him. The most subtle educational methods and practices remain meaningless if they do not bring the individual to look at himself and give thought to his own life. (29)

Makarenko drew attention to the importance and difficulties of stimulating conscience: "I realised how easy it was to teach someone to behave properly in my presence or in the presence of the collective, while teaching him to

act correctly when no one can hear him, see him, and when no one will know whether he has done so or not is very difficult. . . ." (8, 71)

We teachers are or indeed should be mentors, inspirers, guardians, and creators in relation to the individual's intellectual and emotional life during the individual's early childhood and teens. An active emotional and intellectual experience is of paramount importance in the complex process of character formation and development which takes place during school years. Will-power to the mind and emotions is as wind to sails. Self-control is essential intellectual and emotional sphere.

Where do the delicate roots for this human capacity lie? They are planted in concentration of will-power, in efforts to overcome obstacles and in the individual's attempts to force himself to take the harder rather than the easier road.

Spiritual and moral activeness is the powerful force that forges the strong and staunch individual. This effort begins in early childhood, as soon as the individual has two feet firmly on the ground. (20)

The individual comes to educate himself in increasing measure as he attains a deeper understanding of human beings and all that is human. (14, 4)

I am firmly convinced that real education is education that encourages self-education. Teaching children to educate themselves is im-

measurably more difficult than organising Sunday outings. (32)

The emotional and intellectual lives of schoolchildren, particularly those in the senior classes, are illumined by noble dreams of great exploits. Such dreams should be cultivated and nurtured, yet that is not enough: long patient work to achieve a number of goals and to pave the way to exploits is required. Exploits and achievement in the life of the individual are never matters of coincidence, but rather the logical continuation or manifestation of his intellectual and moral development. Exploits achieved within a short space of time ennoble man's character to the same extent as a whole period of intellectually and morally stimulating activity.

In my teaching work I try to ensure that each pupil before leaving school achieve something which as regards his age, his capacities and opportunities would be tantamount to an "exploit" or would be regarded as such by the collective. In the life of every schoolchild circumstances may well arise which demand tremendous mental concentration and emotional effort for an immediate act of the will, all-out activity. On occasion this variety of all-out intellectual and moral activity is required for action that covers a long period. The pupil who in the process of his overall intellectual and emotional development step by step approaches the capacity for the "exploit" and selflessness is well on the way to asserting himself as a mature individual. Helping him along

this path is a very important means of forging his character and intellectual and moral capacities. (6, 20-21)

Aspirations to achieve “exploits” should not be limited to mere heroic dreams. The importance of the exploit in the intellectual and emotional experience of senior pupils is so great that the teacher must on all accounts help them to find scope for manifesting courage and heroism. Whatever an exploit might involve—a short, even momentary concentration of will and emotional energy, or a long struggle to overcome problems, danger or privation—the individual who has once accomplished an exploit achieves a degree of moral fibre that can be won no other way, even by years of skilled, purposeful education. (6, 196).



## SOURCES

This book includes extracts from the following works of Vasily Sukhomlinsky:

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the USSR's younger generation is illustrated with facts concerning the participation of Soviet youth in the economic, political and social life of Soviet society and the role they play in the decision-making process. The book gives a good picture of how young people take advantage of the possibilities they are offered for the development of the personality. One of the important topics covered is the internationalism of Soviet youth and their international ties.

Vasily Alexandrovich Sukhomlinsky, distinguished Soviet educationist, scholar, and Hero of Socialist Labour, is widely known in the USSR and abroad.

Director of a village school in the Ukraine from 1944 until his death on September 2, 1970, Sukhomlinsky devoted the whole of his active life to the noble cause of child education.

He left a considerable body of written works. The foreign reader is already familiar with his books *I Give My Heart to Children* and *The Birth of a Citizen*.

*V. Sukhomlinsky on Education* is an unusual compilation, containing selected passages from many of his writings, including some of those hitherto unpublished.

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